

WHAT WILL THE WORLD SAY?

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

MARK LEMON,

(MEMBER OF THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY).

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TO

H I S M O T H E R,

This Comedy

IS

MOST AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE favourable reception which this Comedy has experienced, is attributable to the talent and friendly anxiety displayed by every Lady and Gentleman concerned in its representation. To Mr. and Mrs. C. Mathews the Author owes much indeed, both for the kindness which stimulated him to exertion, and for the liberality with which they have supported and rewarded his efforts. The Author gladly avails himself of this opportunity, to offer his grateful acknowledgments to the Management and the Performers of Covent Garden Theatre.

October 1, 1841.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD NORWOLD	MR. DIDDEAR.
HON. CHARLES NORWOLD . .	MR. J. VINING.
CAPTAIN TARRADIDDLE . .	MR. FARRER.
PYE HILARY	MR. C. MATHEWS.
MR. WARNER	MR. BARLEY.
NIBBLE	MR. BRINDAL.
GABBLE	MR. W. H. PAYNE.
MR. GRUB	MR. GRANBY.
JAMES	MR. KERBRIDGE.
SERVANT	MR. HUGHES.
•	
LADY NORWOLD	MRS. GLOVER.
MARIAN MAYLEY	MRS. W. LACY.
MISS DE VERE	MISS COOPER.
MRS. TARRADIDDLE	MRS. HUMBY.
TATTLE	MRS. ORGER.
MRS. DEARPOINT	MRS. TAYLEURE.

WHAT WILL THE WORLD SAY ?

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Enclosure in St. James's Park.—Seats on opposite Sides of the Stage.

Enter NIBBLE, with Notes.

NIBBLE.

HERE'S a pretty round ! (*Reads over the addresses.*)
“ Grosvenor-square—Harley-street—Whitehall ”—and a dozen other places. A footman, now-a-days, is worse off than a postman—he has the consolation of knocking double, but we are obliged to content ourselves with a single ring.

Enter GABBLE.

NIBBLE.

Ah ! Gabble, how are you ?

GABBLE (*yawns*).

Oh ! as well as four routs, two concerts, three operas, and one play, will permit.

NIBBLE.

I wonder any of us preserve figure at all. What with the gout and the footboard, its a miracle that a calf is distinguishable among us ! I shall give warning, unless my lord has a dickey put to our carriage—for dam' me if I ain't spoiling my ankles ! By the by, here's a round !

GABBLE.

What, another party !

NIBBLE.

Yes, a rout—coffee, catgut and confectionery—this day three weeks—it's his lordship's birthday.

GABBLE.

Ah ! Fortune gave him the picking of her plate chest, and a pretty sized spoon he selected.

NIBBLE.

Why, yes. We are dusty, I believe. The first Lady Norwold left a handsome sum behind her, which her present ladyship seems determined to make the most of.

GABBLE.

What, by getting rid of it as fast as possible ?

NIBBLE.

Yes,—and I am afraid in a most unfair manner. I think she plays.

GABBLE.

Plays ?

NIBBLE.

I fear so. People have a right to ruin themselves if they please ; but don't let them do *us* an injury ! I look on gaming as a sort of embezzlement of our property, for there's no discount allowed on debts of honour.

GABBLE.

Very true, Nibble ; though I don't see why such debts shouldn't be taxed as well as butter. (*Looks off.*) Ain't that your new governess, Miss De Vere ?

NIBBLE.

Yes—*Miss*, indeed ; that's another professional injustice.

GABBLE.

I don't see it.

NIBBLE.

No ! Do they call us *Misters*, and ain't footmen paid better than teachers ? If the rights of property ain't to be respected, good bye the constitution !

GABBLE.

You're a clever fellow, Nibble, that you are : but I believe your mother was housemaid to a Member of Parliament.

NIBBLE.

Why, I feel as if she had been—hem ! Here comes *Miss* De Vere. Our youngster, Mr. Charles, has a hankering in that quarter, I think.

GABBLE.

Lord, if anything should happen—

NIBBLE.

Why, who could blame the girl; if they will have all the accomplishments for thirty pounds a year, they oughtn't to expect much morality into the bargain! Come, Gabble, the fellow was right, who said, "Ignorance is bliss,"—for it does include board-wages.

[*Exeunt ambo.*]

Enter MISS DE VERE.

MISS DE VERE.

Charles not arrived yet! What can have detained him? Every day my position becomes more painful; the arrogance of Lady Norwold, the impertinence of the servants, encouraged as they are by her conduct towards me, above all, my own culpability, renders my life miserable.—Ah! he is here at last!

Enter CHARLES.

CHARLES.

You must not reproach me, my dear Lucy—not even the shadow of a pout must be traced upon those rosy lips.

MISS DE VERE (*smiling*).

You are arbitrary this morning, Charles.

CHARLES.

I shall always be a despot, when smiles come at my bidding! (*Places her arm in his.*) Well, have you kept our secret?

MISS DE VERE.

Am I not still an inmate of your father's house—and that would no longer be my home were he to know all!

CHARLES.

Sad again! What lachrymose wooer has told you that you are loveliest in tears?

MISS DE VERE.

Forgive me, Charles, but —

CHARLES.

—But smile, and ensure my forgiveness! Now listen to me. I have been arranging a plan to apprise my father of our peculiar situation, and, in the course of four or five months, I hope that necessity for concealment will be at an end.

MISS DE VERE.

Four months!

CHARLES.

It's a long probation, certainly—

MISS DE VERE.

Long! almost a life, Charles, when the hour-glass of Time is filled with doubt and tears!

CHARLES.

Do I not share your peril?

MISS DE VERE.

Yes, but without my fears. Love cannot be concealed: like the violet, it is betrayed by its own sweetness. What will the world believe *me*, Charles? And woman's honour is a polished mirror, that an infant's breath can dim.

CHARLES.

Who will think otherwise of you than you deserve?

MISS DE VERE.

All who judge by the world's wisdom—the hurrying crowd pause not to inquire, but, at a glance, censure or approve.

CHARLES.

The consciousness of innocence should make the world's opinion valueless.

MISS DE VERE.

So says philosophy; but deprive virtue of its influence and its reward, and it becomes, like the miser's hoard, valuable only as concerns the future.

CHARLES.

Lucy, I feel your reproaches!

MISS DE VERE.

They are not reproaches, Charles; but you have a world beyond yourself—mine is my heart and its affections.

CHARLES.

Endure but a little longer, and all your devotedness shall be repaid with wealth and honour—but were I to disclose to his lordship——

MISS DE VERE.

Ah! that word stands like a barrier between love and happiness!

CHARLES.

No, Lucy, no,—but can you wonder that I, nurtured in prejudices, should pause before I encounter the censure of that world which I have been taught almost to revere?

MISS DE VERE.

And yet that world you would have me despise. Oh! Charles! Charles! your theory is not even the reflection of your practice. (*Clock chimes a quarter.*) I must now return to my duties.

CHARLES.

And I dare not accompany you!

MISS DE VERE.

Patience—practise your own precept. Patience, and farewell!

CHARLES.

Farewell, my dear Lucy! (*Kisses her hand.*) Farewell!
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter PYE HILARY, *looking at his watch.*

HILARY.

There never was a punctual woman—they are like Dutch clocks, always too fast or too slow—they're uncertain as a cab-fare, a tavern bill, or a Richmond coach—and there I think the "force of simile can no further go." (*Looks at watch.*) Seventeen minutes and a half past ten! And in twelve minutes and a half more, the Park will be like a nursery ground—maids and babies will be as plentiful as small salad in June. Why the devil don't she come!

[*CAPTAIN TARRADIDDLE is seen at back.*]

I'll never trust to—And 'there's Tarradiddle, by all that's unlucky! that fellow's course is as eccentric as a comet's!—(*going*).

TARRADIDDLE (*calls*).

Hollo! Pye—Pye Hilary!

HILARY.

Oh! lud!

TARRADIDDLE (*comes down*).

How do—how do, my boy? What, like myself, eh?
Out with the ducks—I mean up with the lark!

HILARY.

Yes.

TARRADIDDLE.

Nice place this—I often spend the whole day here—
(*Aside.*) When I've nothing else to spend, and have no
invitation! (*Aloud.*) Here I sit, and watch the Mus-
covies, and the dab-chicks, and the other things paddling
about, till I fancy that I see the rascals swimming in a
lake of brown gravy—take out a biscuit, and devour
them in imagination.

* HILARY.

Then I presume this is your breakfast hour—don't
let me intrude—(*going*).

TARRADIDDLE. .

No, no—I always breakfast at nine, on account of the
cream—it's sour by ten—and my first meal is my most
expensive one—(*aside*) for I do pay for that!

HILARY.

Indeed!

TARRADIDDLE.

Indeed! why you are as laconic as a pauper's epitaph!

What's the matter, my boy? you are either anxious for me to go, or for somebody else to come.

HILARY.

I? (*Aside.*) Can he really doubt which? He must know that he's a bore!

TARRADIDDLE.

Are you fond of children?

HILARY.

Yes, physiologically, but not parochially. What do you mean by that question?

TARRADIDDLE.

Nothing—only I have known some frequenters of this spot find the society of children in long clothes particularly interesting—but then the nurses haven't been remarkably ugly.

HILARY.

Pshaw!

TARRADIDDLE* (*aside*).

It's a petticoat, for all that.

HILARY (*aside*).

I am strongly induced to make him my confidant; he has all the requisites to be useful—impudence the predominant—I will trust him! (*Aloud.*) Tarra, my boy, you are a genius—a mental photograph.

TARRADIDDLE.

You flatter me.

HILARY.

Not in the least, for in the short space of five minutes

you have traced the cause of my presence in this metropolitan Eden of nursery-maids—very nearly.

TARRADIDDLE.

Oh! only I've overcharged the picture.

HILARY.

Yes, the infant in long clothes is imaginary.

TARRADIDDLE.

I see—I've been anticipating futurity.

HILARY.

Rather. We used to agree in our opinions of matrimony.

TARRADIDDLE.

Perfectly. We used to designate the happy state as the younger sons'—Charybdis.

HILARY.

Or, Love in reduced circumstances.

TARRADIDDLE.

Or the madman's arithmetic—multiplying misery by two.

HILARY.

Or that fools were caught by the *honey* moon, as flies are by treacle.

TARRADIDDLE.

Or that a wedding looked like a white funeral, where two ninnies were burying hope, who had left the lady nothing but the reversionary interest of a widowhood, and the gentleman only that of an elopement.

HILARY.

Ha ! ha ! that is what we *used* to think.

TARRADIDDLE.

Used ! Don't paralyze me ! *Do* think, you mean.

HILARY.

No ! no ! Time is a great teacher ! I've changed my opinions.

TARRADIDDLE.

Oh, lord ! I wish you hadn't said that ! There must be something in the air—there's a matrimonial epidemic raging, for you are the fourth fine healthy bachelor that has shown alarming symptoms of the disorder this week. How did *you* take it ?

HILARY.

Naturally—from a pit box at the Opera, on Tuesday last.

TARRADIDDLE.

Oh ! ho ! merely an affection of the eyes—I was afraid it was an inflammation of the heart : your case is not dangerous.

HILARY.

Sir, if ever a man was desperately in love, I am, for I have been afflicted, ever since, with an unquenchable thirst, and a most positive contempt for dormitories in general, and my own in particular.

TARRADIDDLE.

Exactly what I felt, years ago ; but brandy saved me : it first got into my head, and then got me into the watch-house. I should have been married to a certainty, only

when I ought to have been at the altar of St. George's I was at the bar in Bow Street.

HILARY.

I've tried wine, but the bottle seems to have taken the temperance pledge, and won't intoxicate—it only renders my mind a confused amalgamation of opera glasses, pirouettes, and cadenzas whilst *she*—she seems playing at bo-peep, from behind the damask curtains of No. 13, on the Queen's side.—Oh, those eyes! had you only seen them—they were—they were——

TARRADIDDLE.

Both alike.

HILARY.

Stars!—her cheeks—

TARRADIDDLE.

Apple blossoms.

HILARY.

Her neck—

* TARRADIDDLE.

Parian marble, of course.—I know all women at the Opera are alike, if they don't tell their chaperons that you are winking at them.—Pshaw! I thought you were seriously indisposed—but you're not, you're not.

HILARY.

But I am, for as though nature had not done enough for her, Fortune must be her godmother—she's an heiress!

TARRADIDDLE.

An heiress!—I don't believe it—they're so damned scarce, now-a-days—no brown beauties from Bombay—

no weighty Venuses from Wapping: India consumes its own produce, and the City seems to have lost the art. I don't believe it.

HILARY.

Infidel! have you faith in the funds? Not those beautiful mysteries that make a man a Croesus to day, and a lame duck to-morrow—but the golden substance of those paper shadows—those——

TARRADIDDLE.

—A stock-exchange Apollo! why you will be inditing “Stanzas on scrip”—and “Sonnets to Spanish bonds!” Dismount, dismount! and tell me the particulars.

HILARY.

I will, when this—this angel—

TARRADIDDLE.

No, heirress—it is a better term—it's more substantial.

HILARY.

Well, this—no—when this angel and her chaperon, an elderly gentleman, gave notice to quit, I rushed out—the night was favourable——

TARRADIDDLE.

What, last Tuesday! why it rained a torrent!

HILARY.

That was it! for I found that they had no carriage—jarvies were at a premium, but I secured a venerable machine, that would have gone off before—but for the horses.—“Coach!” called the gentleman. “All ’ired,” answered the waterman. “Will you accept of mine?”

said I. Down went the steps—I—I handed the lady in—bowed to the elderly—heard the address, and should have remained under the colonnade till now, had not my reverie been broken by “Summut for calling the coach, your honour!” There’s a romance!

TARRADIDDLE.

Yes, if the jarvey had been a gondola.

HILARY.

Yesterday I haunted the street till I saw her.

TARRADIDDLE.

Ha!

HILARY.

Yes, saw her pull up the blinds, and then pull them down again—that was a good sign.

TARRADIDDLE.

I wish you hadn’t said that; for it seems to me a lady-like way of shutting the door in your face.

HILARY.

Pshaw! It’s modern flirtation—a substitute for the old fan practice. “Oh, there he is!—well, I never!” I’m satisfied.

TARRADIDDLE.

But how did you ascertain the fact of the essential—I blush to name it—the money?

HILARY.

By my admiration of the fine arts.

TARRADIDDLE.

Admiration! Fine arts!

HILARY.

Yes, struck by the portrait of a red cow that ornamented the door of a dairy in the neighbourhood, I inquired the name of the artist—then the state of trade—expressed my delight that the increase of the consumption of milk was one cow in ten—that—

TARRADIDDLE.

But, what the devil has this to do with the lady? She's not a milk-maid!

HILARY.

A milk-maid! No! though she might serve for the divinity of a pastoral. But the particulars. Ten years ago—

TARRADIDDLE.

Stop—stop! If it's a ten years' story, I'll take a seat.

HILARY.

Then I'll content myself with an abstract. Her father was a ship-chandler, who, at the period I mentioned, made up his accounts, and left his daughter, Marian Mayley, ward to one Abraham Warner, citizen, and the heiress to fifteen thousand pounds in the three per cents.

TARRADIDDLE.

My dear boy, I'm glad to hear you say that. I congratulate you! I never knew the disease exhibit such favourable symptoms. And your appointment, this morning, is with her?

HILARY.

No, with her maid;—and such a maid! The milk-

woman pointed her out as she passed the window. Intrigue is discernible in every plait of her petticoat. I wouldn't keep her in my house, if I were married, upon any consideration; for I should certainly become food for powder, or a law-suit, a corpse, or a cuckold—perhaps both.

TARRADIDDLE.

What alternatives! A lawyer, two mutes, and a hatchment! (*Looks off.*) This must be the damsel. Pretty foot—and she knows it, or she wouldn't have shown her leg in stepping over that little boy's hoop-stick. Hem!

Enter TATTLE. [*She curtsseys, the Gentlemen bow.*]

TATTLE.

Have I the honour of addressing Pye Hilary, Esq.?

HILARY.

I own that "humble name," madam. Mrs. Tattle, I presume?

TATTLE.

The same. And this gentleman?

HILARY (*aside*).

That's a poser! (*Aloud.*) Captain Scroop Tarradiddle, of the—of the—

TARRADIDDLE.

Of the army. (*Aside.*) Very inquisitive!

HILARY.

Of the army, and my most intimate friend.

TATTLE.

I'm proud to make the acquaintance—you are the

individual gentleman, then, who commissioned Mrs. Cowless of the Grosvenor dairy to deliver this letter—

HILARY.

And inclosure.

TATTLE.

And inclosure to me.

HILARY.

I am.

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

How damned systematic.—Very awful!

TATTLE (*aside*).

I think I'm impressing them! (*Aloud.*) Your object in making this assignation, I presume, is not on my own account.

HILARY.

Why, I regret that it has reference more to Miss Mayley.

TATTLE.

I'm glad of that, for I must have declined any advances, highly flattering as they must have been, coming from such a quarter. (*Aside.*) That's from "Clara Rosserville," or "the Orphan Housemaid."

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

What an affected doll it is! Those eyes, Mrs. Tattle, must have made sad havoc in the butler's pantry.

TATTLE.

Butler's pantry, Sir! I have offers from Sandwell our

grocer, and from Patty, our buttermilk man, both very respectable men,—only Sandwell is a little too old, and Patty a little too auburn.

TARRADIDDLE.

I apologise, I apologise.

HILARY.

And Miss Mayley—is she as amply provided as yourself, Mrs. Tattle?

TATTLE.

Miss Mayley, Sir, is a deal too fastidious in my opinion. Lovers shouldn't be looked at like French Cambric—you're all a little faulty. I've broken the ice for a dozen young fellows who thought nothing of a five pound note.

HILARY (*aside*).

That's a hint for me; my donation was only a sovereign.

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

Quite enough, too, for what we've got by it.

HILARY.

And were such valuable young gentlemen all rejected?

TATTLE.

Lord bless you, Sir, she wouldn't hear of one of them, though I used to talk of all the inducements that I could think of—marriages, christenings, elopements; but the fact is, she is very proud, and has made up her mind to marry a title, or die a spinster.

HILARY (*to TARRADIDDLE*).

There go my hopes!

TARRADIDDLE.

Pshaw! you can borrow a title, or I'll give you one.
(To TATTLE.) Hem! Mrs. Tattle, you are evidently a very clever woman!

TATTLE.

Well, under the circumstances, I'll not say no to that, Captain Diddle.

TARRADIDDLE.

I beg your pardon, Tarradiddle, my dear. My friend Lord Hilly, I mean Mr. Hilary, is very anxious for an introduction to Miss Mayley—as his Lords—as he is about to visit the Continent; the sooner the auspicious moment can be brought about the better, eh, my Lor—Mr. Hilary?

[HILARY *evinces an anxiety to remonstrate.*

TARRADIDDLE *restrains him.*

TATTLE (*aside*).

He is a lord—I thought so, for he only enclosed a sovereign. He don't want money himself; and so he thinks no one else does.

HILARY (*to TARRADIDDLE, who has been arguing—aside*).

No! no! I'll consent to no deception!

TARRADIDDLE.

Pshaw! I may use what form of expression I please; she can believe what she likes. Now, my dear Mrs. Tattle, what do you propose?

TATTLE (*to HILARY*).

Why, let me see—suppose my Lord—

HILARY.

Not my lord; plain Mr. Hilary—(*aside*) “Potentes ne studeas cœmulari.”

TATTLE.

Oh! (*looks at TARRADIDDLE*).

TARRADIDDLE (*aside to TATTLE*).

He's incog.—Don't want to dazzle her with his title.

TATTLE (*aside to TARRADIDDLE*).

Oh! I understand; but that's very like having a best gown and never wearing it!—(*Aloud.*) Well, then, suppose he was to see her?

TARRADIDDLE.

Singular coincidence! that is just what *we* were supposing.

HILARY.

But how to obtain such a desideratum, Mrs. Tattle!

TATTLE.

That's the difficulty. You couldn't break your leg opposite our door, could you?

HILARY.

Why, that would be rather inconvenient, I must confess.

TARRADIDDLE.

And a gentleman is not seen to advantage on a stretcher.

TATTLE.

I have it! There are apartments to let opposite our

house—you could take them: Miss has a favourite canary—I could steal the bird—vow it had escaped—you could return it.

HILARY *and* TARRADIDDLE.

Capital! capital!

HILARY.

I'll take the apartments to-day.

TATTLE.

And I'll bring the bird in the evening.

TARRADIDDLE.

And then we'll wait upon Miss Mayley. Mrs. Tattle, your ingenuity does you honour—your profession ought to be proud of such a diplomatist; and my friend Lor—Mr. Hilary, begs your acceptance of two sovereigns.

TATTLE.

Oh, Sir!

HILARY.

Certainly!—(*Aside.*) Tarradiddle is the most generous fellow alive with any body's purse but his own!—(*gives money*).

TARRADIDDLE.

For myself, Mrs. Tattle—for myself, I shall ever remain your debtor, for the interest you take in my friend's welfare.

TATTLE.

Oh! don't name it, pray!—You may expect me in the evening; and, as I live, here comes master and Miss—

La ! what shall I do ? I can't go that way because of the cows,—and if I'm seen I shall be ruined !—I must run if I am tossed for it. *[Exit.]*

Enter MISS MAYLEY, and ABRAHAM WARNER.—MISS MAYLEY *looks after* TATTLE.

TARRADIDDLE.

Egad ! she's a fine animal.

HILARY.

Lovely ! Take a seat—take a seat.—

[They occupy one of the park benches.]

MISS MAYLEY.

That was certainly my maid Tattle !

WARNER.

It may be a want of taste, Marian—but your boasted Opera sinks into insignificance, when compared with this delicious scene.

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh, no ! Nothing can bear comparison with that fairy region of elegance and beauty : the very sounds seem fragrant, the eye and ear alike are charmed—*(Sees* HILARY.) Ah ! there he is.

WARNER.

Nature has for me the same allurements.

MISS MAYLEY

He has recognised me—I feel very, very strangely.

WARNER.

You seem thoughtful, my dear !

MISS MAYLEY.

I—yes—a reminiscence of the Opera—a——

WARNER.

A more pleasant one, I trust, than the rheumatism which has daily reminded me of my last visit.

[*He is about to sit.*]

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh, don't sit down!

WARNER.

Eh!

MISS MAYLEY.

Think of your rheumatism, Sir—the air is very keen this morning.

WARNER.

Quite the reverse, my dear—very sultry!— [Sits.]

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

What an unlucky *contre temps*! The man will think I am the fourteenth daughter of some unpopular family, and wish to attract his notice.

WARNER.

Come, Marian.

[*Takes out a book.*]

MISS MAYLEY.

I can see him peeping over his friend's shoulder if it should rain again, as it did at the Opera!

TARRADIDDLE (*aside to HILARY.*)

Beautiful position for attack! fire away, Pye! I'll mask the battery in front.

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh heart! heart! why will you flutter so? I wonder who he is? Ah! he is looking at me.

HILARY (*aside to TARRADIDDLE*).

She glanced this way, then!

TARRADIDDLE (*aside to HILARY*).

I think this attitude's imposing—stamps the military man, I flatter myself.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

I never noticed him at the Opera before,—don't read, Guardey!

WARNER.

When was I at the Opera before? Let me see——

MISS MAYLEY.

If Tattle has dared to tell him that I am disengaged! He is evidently a gentleman.

WARNER (*resuming his book*).

Yes—certainly—thirty-eight.

MISS MAYLEY.

Thirty-eight, Sir! He can't be more than five and twenty! (*Aside.*) Oh! what am I doing?

WARNER.

No, my dear, thirty-eight—I remember it, from one or two circumstances. [*Continues to read.*]

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

Does she blush? does she blush?

HILARY (*aside*).

Yes!

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

Then I'll give her a look—one of my telegraphic winks! [*Rising.*]

HILARY (*restraining him*).

No! no! not for the universe!

MISS MAYLEY (*to WARNER in an under tone*).

Is not that gentleman on the opposite bench the one who was so polite to us on Tuesday evening?

WARNER (*raising his glasses*).

Where?

MISS MAYLEY (*restraining him*).

Oh! don't do that!

WARNER.

My dear, I can't see, unless I use my glasses.

MISS MAYLEY (*alarmed*).

Then never mind!

[WARNER *peeps covertly at* PYE HILARY
and TARRADIDDLE.

HILARY (*to TARRADIDDLE*).

The old gentleman is reconnoitering.

TARRADIDDLE.

Then, why don't you bow?

HILARY.

Bow! do you think I am bronze?

WARNER.

The resemblance is very strong—I'll ask.

MISS MAYLEY.

If you do I shall faint!

TARRADIDDLE (*to* HILARY.)

I'll ask for a pinch of snuff.

HILARY (*to* TARRADIDDLE).

Not if you value your nose!

TARRADIDDLE.

Are you certain that you want a wife?

HILARY.

Positive!

TARRADIDDLE.

Then you intend to marry by proxy. I volunteer.

[*Rises.*]

HILARY.

Tarradiddle, don't make me an assassin!

[TARRADIDDLE *drags* PYE HILARY *to centre.*]

WARNER.

Common politeness, my dear—

TARRADIDDLE *bows, then* PYE.

Good morning—hope you're well!

WARNER.

Good morning, Sir! Good morning!

[*Exeunt* MISS MAYLEY, *hurrying* WARNER.]

HILARY.

Emblem of impudence! brass will henceforth be the type of modesty.

[*Exeunt* PYE, and TARRADIDDLE.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Room in ABRAHAM WARNER'S House.

ABRAHAM WARNER *discovered*.—*Tap heard at the door.*

WARNER.

Come in.

Enter MR. GRUB.

Well, Mr. Grub, good morning.

GRUB.

Good morning, Sir. I am happy to say that I am the bearer of good news.

WARNER.

So much the more welcome, Mr. Grub. What is the nature of it?

GRUB.

Lady Norwold has been with me again this morning.

WARNER.

Indeed!

GRUB.

Yes, Sir. She requires a further advance of money,

and proposes to lodge an elegant suite of diamonds with me as security. I have seen them, Sir, and amongst them, I think, is the bracelet you have so long desired to obtain.

WARNER.

Ah! the portrait of a lady, surrounded with brilliants.

GRUB.

With a clasp of mosaic work?

WARNER.

The same; and my unwearied patience is at last rewarded!

GRUB.

Is the bracelet then so valuable, Sir?

WARNER.

That bauble has influenced my destiny for years. You have only known me as the sordid merchant. I have had a more powerful stimulus than the gratification of my desire for wealth. What sum does she require?

GRUB.

Five thousand pounds, Sir.

WARNER.

At what hour do you expect Lady Norwold?

GRUB.

This afternoon, at four o'clock, Sir.

WARNER.

I will be with you before that hour. [Miss MAYLEY sings within.] Ah—my merry ward!

GRUB.

Then I will take my leave. Good morning, Sir.

WARNER.

Good morning.

[*Exit GRUB.*]

Enter MISS MAYLEY.

MISS MAYLEY.

Hey-dey! two o'clock, and Mr. Warner playing truant on the west side of Temple-bar. Your absence will cause a panic in the City.

WARNER.

I hope not, Marian; but to-day I am repaid for the labour of a life, and must keep holiday.

●

MISS MAYLEY.

I don't understand you.

WARNER (*turns away*).

I dare say not. Wiser heads than your's have attempted to fathom my motives and actions before now, and have failed, Marian.

MISS MAYLEY.

Nay, it is unfair to propound a riddle, and then withhold the solution. You are too kind to tease me, even with curiosity (*kisses him*).

WARNER.

Thank you both for your kiss and your compliment. I think I shall deserve another when I tell you of a plan I have to increase, I hope, your happiness.

MISS MAYLEY.

You are always thinking of something that yields me pleasure. What has your affection devised now, may I ask?

WARNER.

I have often felt, Marian, that my old fashioned thoughts and habits must be as wearisome to you as a thrice read novel, or a dress that had seen its second season.

MISS MAYLEY.

I will not plead guilty to the libel—I am never weary of you—confess that you believe me.

WARNER.

I do ; but tell me, should you not like a younger companion than Abraham Warner ?

MISS MAYLEY.

La, Sir ! (*Aside.*) That impudent fellow in the Park has been making a proposal.

WARNER

One who *must* learn to love you.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

He has !

WARNER.

As a sister.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

I don't think his love would be quite so platonic.

WARNER.

Your pleasures then would be multiplied—the song would be sweeter sung by the familiar voice—the dance would be gayer shared with one you loved.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

What delightful ideas Guardy has of courtship ;—I wonder that he don't make another personal venture.

WARNER.

Who knows the hidden springs of woman's heart—the depths of her confiding love—her changeless idolatry?

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

Like a husband.

WARNER.

Like a woman.

MISS MAYLEY.

A woman!—Is it a woman after all?—What a disappointment!

WARNER.

Hey-day! surely you were not thinking of a husband?

MISS MAYLEY.

The ambiguity of your remarks might have led me into such a train of thought, as I believe it is not very unusual with young ladies.

WARNER.

Yet you have been very decided in the rejection of the many suitors for your hand.

MISS MAYLEY.

True, Sir; but were there any whom I could have accepted?

WARNER.

Mr. Hardman.

MISS MAYLEY.

A tobacconist! who must have patronized the horrors that he dealt in.

WARNER.

Mr. Mulct, the publisher.

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh! "The Miseries of Human Life," bound in black cloth!—I never saw Mr. Mulct without some unpleasant associations.

WARNER.

Indeed!—Mr. Mulct is a great patron of deserving authors.

MISS MAYLEY.

I am afraid that your publisher resembles the lower compartment of an hour-glass, which is stored only by exhausting that which is *above* it. Mr. Mulct is too mirthless to be generous.

WARNER.

But Mr. Hammerton was the personification of mer-
riment and—

MISS MAYLEY.

An auctioneer!—He would *value* a wife as he does an estate, and divide his matrimonial hopes into "lots." His wit was phosphorescent, and only became visible when all other lights were absent.

WARNER.

Well, well, I suppose the City must abandon the hope of having you for a Lady Mayoress.

MISS MAYLEY.

Make the position permanent and I might be tempted.

WARNER.

Eh! Then you would choose a husband as the vulgar do a book—by the title?

MISS MAYLEY.

As matrimony is a sealed volume, we can only judge by externals, and *your ladyship* would compensate for numerous *errata*.

WARNER.

“Your ladyship”—a sound!

MISS MAYLEY.

A magic one! Custom accords it homage, Fashion asks it to grace her revels, Charity begs only for that *name* to aid her cause. Utter it in the crowd, and her happy ladyship finds an unimpeded course; her smile is welcomed as a boon, her word as a command. “Your ladyship!” That word would make the bonds of wedlock light indeed!

WARNER.

I have done. Folly owes many a proselyte to the gaud and tinkle of his cap and bells. I have done.

MISS MAYLEY.

And pray, who is the companion whom you have selected for me?

WARNER.

My daughter—

MISS MAYLEY.

What, my dear old play-fellow, Lucy?

WARNER.

Yes. A week ago I learned that her maternal aunt with whom she has resided so long, has been foolish enough to marry again, and has left my chit in Paris for above these two months to the care of her milliner. Lucy, for some reason, has declined informing me of the fact.

MISS MAYLEY.

No doubt, from a desire to conceal your sister-in-law's folly, as long as possible, from you.

WARNER.

Perhaps so. I have written to Lucy, who will return in a few days to share with you the dominion over this carpeted and gilded kingdom.

MISS MAYLEY.

I shall be happy to divide my empire with one who has a claim to your name and disposition.

WARNER.

Fie! fie! flattery to an old man—keep that for my epitaph.

MISS MAYLEY.

You are angry with me.

WARNER.

Angry with you! Vanity is one of the shadows that we are never too old or too wise to pursue. Good morning.

MISS MAYLEY.

Good morning, Sir.

[Exit WARNER.]

Strange, good man!

Enter TATTLE.

Oh! Mistress Tattle, I should like to know if my suspicions of the morning are correct—(*sits and commences reading*).

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss.

MISS MAYLEY.

Have you been out this morning?

TATTLE.

Out, Miss? yes, Miss, I went to Lastings the shoemaker.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

Oh!

TATTLE (*aside*).

She saw me! she don't look angry. I'll broach the subject. If once your mistress makes you her confidant, you change places, she becomes *the servant*, and that makes your fortune.

MISS MAYLEY.

Have you trimmed the cap as I desired, Tattle?

TATTLE.

No, Miss—I was just going to do so.

MISS MAYLEY.

You can bring it here and work at that table.

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss. (*Aside.*) She wants to pump me.

[*Exit.*

MISS MAYLEY.

He has seen her. It was very impertinent of him, and Tattle ought to be discharged. I wonder what he asked her? I don't think Tattle *can* keep a secret; she *must* tell me in time; but if I don't know to-day, I shall be very uncomfortable. Really I am quite vexed with myself. I'll not hear any thing she has to say connected with that young gentleman. Oh! she returns.

●
Re-enter TATTLE *with a cap.*

You can sit down there, Tattle.

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss. (*Pause*). I wonder she don't begin; I'm certain she suspects me (*aside*).

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

She's guilty. I never knew her silent so long before.

TATTLE (*aside*).

This is doing nothing. (*Aloud.*) It's a beautiful day out, Miss.

MISS MAYLEY.

So I found, Tattle. (*Aside.*) That is the first chord of the symphony.

TATTLE.

Especially in the Park [*looks knowingly at Miss MAYLEY, who does not raise her eyes*]. Did you go in the Park, Miss?

MISS MAYLEY.

Yes; it is a favourite walk of Mr. Warner's. (*Aside.*) What a conscience that girl must have!

TATTLE.

It's a favourite place of many people's, Miss. It's quiet—I suppose that's it.

MISS MAYLEY.

- I suppose so. (*Aside.*) I'd no idea Tattle was such an experienced person.

TATTLE.

And yet I do meet a great many people we know there sometimes. (*Aside.*) That's a good leading remark.

MISS MAYLEY.

What, friends of Mr. Warner's?

TATTLE.

Of course not, Miss. (*Aside.*) That's a stopper; a lady's maid can do no more.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

I am afraid I have alarmed her.

TATTLE.

One can't be expected to do every thing; but what can you expect from a Cit's daughter? She must be courted as the grandmother was, and then would not marry without asking the consent of the parish.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

This is downright obstinacy! (*Aloud.*) Tattle!

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss.

MISS MAYLEY.

Did you see any one this morning that I—that we know?

TATTLE.

No, Miss.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

That's a fib—she's really a very wicked woman.

TATTLE.

Oh, yes; I remember I saw Mr.—Mr.—

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

Well, I shall learn his name at last.

TATTLE.

Mr.—Oh! no; it was my late young lady that was intimate with Mr. Sunnucks.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

If it was not for compromising myself, I'd box her ears.

TATTLE.

She was very like you, Miss: she vowed that she'd never marry any but a nobleman.

MISS MAYLEY (*with effort*).

And did she keep her resolution?

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss; though he was only a baronet. I hope you'll be more fortunate;—I don't see why you should not—there are plenty of remnants of nobility that one might get a bargain.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

She alludes to him. I said he was very like Lord Lammerly's family. (*Aloud.*) Still, Tattle, I should not like to be sought for my property alone.

TATTLE.

Now is that likely?—See how the gentlemen and

lords too, stare at you in the street, and the Park, and the Opera.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

The Opera! (*Aloud.*) Tattle, give me the eau de Cologne.

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss. (*Aside.*) I've done enough for three guineas.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

I must be satisfied. (*Aloud.*) General admiration is not what I covet; I am desirous only to secure the love of one.

TATTLE.

In particular, Miss?

MISS MAYLEY.

In particular!—You know there is not any one in particular—at present, don't you?

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss; though I am the last person in the world to interfere in such a vital business as sweet-hearting. Hadn't I better go to the milliner about your bonnet, Miss?

MISS MAYLEY (*impatiently*).

Oh, yes; go—go, and don't let me see you again till the evening.

TATTLE.

Why, I hope—

MISS MAYLEY.

Don't answer me, but go.

TATTLE (*aside*).

She's vexed; I've a great mind to sulk till to-morrow.

[*Exit.*

MISS MAYLEY.

I'm convinced that she has seen him—that she knows his name—that he wants to see me, and—that—I shall break my heart with vexation.

[*Exit, crying.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in LORD NORWOLD's House.

Enter NIBBLE with a newspaper.

NIBBLE.

A circuit of five miles to a man of my quiet habits is a gross extra in my duties, and a thing not to be forgotten or forgiven [*sits*] consequently I shan't answer a bell for the rest of the day [*bell rings*]. Thank you, that beauty's handle is in the school-room, two flights of stairs without reckoning the passage [*bell*]. That's her ladyship's; I hope somebody will answer that, for her first bell is always for something she does want, most of the others are for something she fancies.

Enter JAMES.

JAMES.

Her ladyship wants the paper, Mr. Nibble.

NIBBLE.

Tell her it hasn't come.

JAMES.

But will that be right?

NIBBLE.

Right, Sir? d——me I'm the senior footman in this establishment and can't do wrong!

JAMES (*aside*).

Indeed! then I wish I was old enough for the situation. [*Exit.*]

NIBBLE.

These newspaper fellows are cursedly low—(*reads*) “Robbery of Plate—yesterday, James Smith, a footman *out of place*,”—why the devil couldn't they say “out of office?”—such language is enough to destroy all one's aristocracy: one would think that Mr. Smith had been a light porter to a cheesemonger.

Enter MISS DE VERE.

MISS DE VERE.

Are you aware, Nibble, that her ladyship has inquired for the newspaper?

NIBBLE.

Yes, Miss.

MISS DE VERE.

And is it not your duty to take it to her?

NIBBLE.

No, Miss; I am my lord's footman: I've nothing to do with the females of this establishment.

MISS DE VERE (*going*).

I think her ladyship would entertain a different

opinion were she made acquainted with your present behaviour.

NIBBLE.

Will you name it to her ladyship, Miss?

MISS DE VERE.

I am no talebearer.—You will take this letter to the post.

NIBBLE (*rising*).

Is it her ladyship's?

MISS DE VERE.

No; it's mine.

NIBBLE.

Then I'll be —— if I do. (*Enter CHARLES.*) You are as much a servant as I am: you attend the children, and I attend the knocker: you go into the drawing-room when you're rung for, and so do I: you've a month's warning or a month's wages, and so have I; you let your mind out at £30 a year, and I take service for the same and two suits of livery;—so, as I can't see much difference between us, you may take your letter to the Post whenever you please.

MISS DE VERE.

Still I am your superior, for I can despise you—(*going*).

CHARLES.

Stay, Lucy! [*To NIBBLE.*] Take that letter, Sir!

NIBBLE (*consequently*).

I have made Miss De Vere acquainted with my views—for d——me I'd rather carry out physic for a doctor than be servant to your—

CHARLES.

What, Sir?

NIBBLE.

Governess.

[*Exit.*

CHARLES.

Scoundrel! I will chastise your insolence! [*Exit.*

MISS DE VERE.

Charles! Charles!—My worst fears are already realized,—that man suspects me! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

An elegant Breakfast-room in LORD NORWOLD's House.

Enter LADY NORWOLD and SERVANT.

LADY NORWOLD.

Have you apprized his lordship that I am waiting breakfast?

SERVANT.

Yes, my lady. His lordship is here!

Enter LORD NORWOLD with a banker's book in his hand.

LADY NORWOLD.

So, Henry, you are becoming quite a husband at last; five minutes have I been waiting for you.

LORD NORWOLD (*not regarding her*).

Hem!

LADY NORWOLD.

Hem! What book have you there.—From your melancholy looks one would fancy it was “The Chronicles of the Plague.”

LORD NORWOLD (*smil*

You might have made a wider guess, my dear, for it in some way concerns you.

LADY NORWOLD.

And am I a plague! A very pretty morning compliment, upon my word! But what is it really?

LORD NORWOLD.

It is an additional volume to our family history.

LADY NORWOLD.

Indeed!

LORD NORWOLD (*shows book*).

Yes, on one side you will see noted down the evidences of our nobility,—pounds, shillings, and pence. On the other, the records of our folly.

LADY NORWOLD.

Pshaw! It's your banker's account.

LORD NORWOLD.

And a very unpleasant hour's study it has afforded me.

LADY NORWOLD.

I don't pity you since you have been so horribly plebeian as to learn arithmetic. Shut it up, and let posterity amuse itself, if it can, with the perusal. By-the-by, Henry, I wish you would make an addition to the list of follies, and give me a check for one hundred pounds.

LORD NORWOLD.

If you require it, Lydia, certainly; although I have already overdrawn Messrs. Consols.

LADY NORWOLD.

Good souls! they take it as an evidence of your friendship, rely upon it: they know that your lordship would'nt condescend to borrow of any but friends. Just a hundred, and I'll not trouble you again for a week.

LORD NORWOLD.

Don't you think—James, leave the room.

[*Exit JAMES.*]

LADY NORWOLD (*aside.*)

That's an ominous sign—I detest a confidential *tête-à-tête*.

LORD NORWOLD.

Don't you think, Lydia, we could reduce our expenditure?

LADY NORWOLD.

As far as I am concerned I don't think it possible.

LORD NORWOLD.

Suppose—I merely put it hypothetically—suppose we

were to dispense with one of the carriages—say the *vis-à-vis*—and the Richmond villa might be sold, and I think your present stock of jewellery need not be increased for a year or so,—these retrenchments would amount to—how much?

LADY NORWOLD.

I'm not clever at arithmetic, my lord.

LORD NORWOLD.

Pray be serious a minute.

LADY NORWOLD.

I was never more so;—shall I tell your lordship what these retrenchments would produce?

LORD NORWOLD.

That is what I am trying to arrive at.

LADY NORWOLD.

They would produce a great deal of inconvenience—a great many unpleasant remarks—and a great domestic quarrel between ourselves; so if you please I'll ring the bell for James, and break up this committee of ways and means. Give up the *vis-à-vis*! What would the world say?

LORD NORWOLD.

But we shall be ruined!

LADY NORWOLD.

Ruin is preferable to retrenchment! Let us fall with three carriages; they will at least make the auctioneer's catalogue more respectable. (*Rings.*)

Enter JAMES.

Desire Miss De Vere to come to me.

[*Exit* JAMES.]

LORD NORWOLD (*aside*).

How unlike the former Lady Norwold—what imposing balances were always on the credit side of my account during her lifetime.

Enter CHARLES (aloud).

Ah, Charles.

CHARLES.

Good morning, my lord,—your ladyship's most obedient.

LADY NORWOLD.

Why not "mamma"? I declare I should be quite proud of the designation.

CHARLES.

My reverence for the one who claimed that title from me must be my apology for calling you "my lady."

LADY NORWOLD.

Have you been peeping into the family history too this morning? You look quite as serious as his lordship.

CHARLES.

The family history?

LADY NORWOLD.

Yes; the banker's book.

CHARLES (*smiling*).

I regret to say that I make but a small figure in that work.

LORD NORWOLD.

Very true ; her ladyship converts all your tens into units.

Enter MISS DE VERE.

MISS DE VERE.

You desired my presence, your ladyship.

LADY NORWOLD.

Oh, I wish little Master Horace to accompany me this morning.

MISS DE VERE.

Very well, my lady.

LADY NORWOLD.

Very well, my lady,—why the separation for a few hours can't be so very painful as to require such a mournful answer.—Are you ill, or out of humour ?

MISS DE VERE.

I am not well, my lady.

LADY NORWOLD.

Then I am sorry for you ;—I am afraid that an indisposition of body is frequently mistaken for an indisposition of temper.—I am never ill.

CHARLES.

Your ladyship is not a governess.

LADY NORWOLD.

True, I have no occasion for holidays ;—Miss De Vere I will take both the children.

Enter NIBBLE.

LORD NORWOLD.

Well, Nibble.

NIBBLE.

I beg your lordship's pardon for intruding; but there are circumstances that will make a servant come up without being rung for.

LORD NORWOLD.

Well, well—

NIBBLE.

My lord, your lordship's livery has been caned; this livery that I wear has been beat with a stick.

LORD NORWOLD.

Nothing very serious in that.

NIBBLE.

True, my lord; but when I tell you that I was in it, I presume that your lordship will alter your opinion.

LORD NORWOLD.

Well, who caned you?

NIBBLE.

Mr. Charles, my lord; and I must,—as a first footman—I must give warning.

LORD NORWOLD.

Charles, is this true?

CHARLES.

Yes, my lord; and his insolence to this lady deserved a much severer chastisement.

LORD *and* LADY NORWOLD.

Miss De Vere!

LADY NORWOLD (*sneeringly*).

Indeed! she was fortunate to find a champion.

CHARLES.

In me, madam, she will always find a champion.

LADY NORWOLD.

Why were you insolent, Sir, to the governess of my children?

NIBBLE.

Oh! my lady, virtuous indignation may exist under a livery waistcoat.—Mr. Charles—imagine, my lady, imagine,—

LADY NORWOLD (*with dignity*).

Miss De Vere's position in this establishment will be painful after this occurrence; she must consider her duties ended.

MISS DE VERE.

Oh! Charles!—(*rushes to him*).

LORD *and* LADY NORWOLD.

Charles!

CHARLES.

Be not surprised, my lord, that this lady should have sought a refuge on the bosom of him that hath sworn to protect her.

LORD NORWOLD.

What do I hear! You will not dare assert that she is—

CHARLES.

My wife! my lord.

MISS DE VERE.

My love has been selfish, but not criminal.

LORD NORWOLD.

Young man, you have dared to disgrace your family by an alliance with one of my menials. From henceforth never cross the threshold of my house. Go! starve! for I consign you to beggary.

CHARLES.

My lord, I expected no other portion at your hands.

LORD NORWOLD.

Come, my lady, let me lead you from this scene of shame and dishonour.

LADY NORWOLD.

Oh! my dear lord, what will the world say?

[Exeunt ambo. — NIBBLE sits in a chair.]

CHARLES.

And let me lead you, Lucy, from this scene of shame and dishonour, but not to you.

MISS DE VERE.

Oh! that I dared to seek *my* father!

CHARLES

It would be useless, Lucy; the ties of nature are severed at the shrine of Mammon.

MISS DE VERE.

Charles! Charles! we are now tasting the bitterness of error.

CHARLES.

Lucy, do not unman me. Come! we are young—
“The world is all before us”—and with you as the
stimulant to exertion, I can yet secure us competency!

NIBBLE.

Shall I ring for the door to be opened?

CHARLES.

Reptile!

[Exeunt CHARLES and MISS DE VERE.]

NIBBLE.

Reptile!—If he was worth powder, I'd bring an
action!

[Drinks coffee as the curtain descends.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Apartment in MRS. DEARPOINT'S House.

Enter CAPTAIN TARRADIDDLE, followed Mrs. DEARPOINT.

TARRADIDDLE.

Every thing very nice, very nice, and the terms five guineas per week?

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Yes, Sir. (TARRADIDDLE *smiles.*) Captain, I beg pardon.

TARRADIDDLE.

Never mind, we shall get used to one another in a day or two; I take your rooms for my *friend*, though I shall also reside here myself.

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Thank you, Sir; I'll do my best to make you comfortable.

TARRADIDDLE.

There is one thing, however, I should like to name

to you, Mrs. Dearpoint. Do you think you can keep a secret ?

MRS. DEARPOINT.

A secret, Sir ! I'm proud to say that I am no gossiper.

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

I knew she'd say that ! (*Aloud.*) I've told you that your new lodger is Mr. Pye Hilary—no, no—he wishes it concealed, and I have no business to do violence to his modest nature !

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Modest nature ! Why he's nothing in disguise ?—Recollect, Sir, these apartments are of the highest respectability.

TARRADIDDLE.

For shame, Mrs. Dearpoint, for shame ! Is there a trace of impropriety in his contour ?

MRS. DEARPOINT.

But you military gentlemen are such very—I don't know what to call you—

TARRADIDDLE.

I wish you hadn't said that ; but to remove any suspicion of indecorum from your mind, I will confide our secret to you—no one at the keyhole ?

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Oh dear, no captain !

TARRADIDDLE.

Then know, Mrs. Dearpoint, that Mr. Pye Hilary is—

MRS. DEAR OINT.

Who?—who, captain?

TARRA DIDDLE.

Lord Hilly the rightful heir to the great Noland estate.

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Indeed!

TARRADIDDLE.

But not a word—

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Not a syllable unless you would allow me just to hint it to Mrs. Bannister, who lets lodgings next door.

TARRADIDDLE.

Won't it be compromising my friend?

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Not in the least—pray allow me—

TARRADIDDLE.

But why?

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Because she'll break her heart with envy—and she's such a creature!

TARRADIDDLE.

Then hint it—mind only a hint!—Nothing about the estate.

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Not a word—nothing more than my first floor is let to a lord! (*Aside.*)

[*Exit.*]

TARRADIDDLE.

I'm glad she said that ! If Hilary ain't a lord, on both sides of the street by to-morrow morning, maids of all work are martyrs to the silent system, and hearthstones are no longer the incentives to eloquence—(*knock*). Ah, Hilary and the baggage. If this match comes off satisfactorily I shall make bold to beg—no, to borrow a few hundreds.—By begging you forfeit your character, by borrowing you only forfeit your word: the one's mendicity, the other's mendacity, and the world cares less for mortality than it does for appearance.

Enter PYE HILARY.

TARRADIDDLE.

Well, my boy,—snug—eh, snug ?

HILARY.

Yes ; just the thing for a bachelor.

TARRADIDDLE.

Or bachelors. (*Aside.*) I'll take the liberty of adding the final s.

HILARY.

There's her house, Tarradiddle. How often have her delicate fingers agitated that insensible knocker. That door has seen her lovely face, and never changed colour—those flowers in the balcony are doubtless her especial care, and yet the rose tree to the right looks as dingy as a dustman. Will she ever knock me about—will she ever look me full in the face—will she ever feel an interest in my welfare ?

TARRADIDDLE.

Why, Pye, I begin to think that your case is serious! These poetical eruptions are indicative of strong internal fever.

Enter MRS. DEARPOINT.

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Which of the portmanteaus is to go into your room, Sir?

HILARY.

Both, ma'am, if you please.

MRS. DEARPOINT.

Only that I thought that the Captain——

TARRADIDDLE.

I'll send for mine to-morrow;—my damned fellow has taken advantage of my absence, and gone down to Greenwich.

MRS. DEARPOINT (*speaks off*).

Take the portmanteau into his lordship's room. (*Turns to* HILARY). I beg pardon for that *lapis lingo*,—and now for Mrs Bannister. [*Exit.*

HILARY.

What, you've been bamming the old woman; popping me into the House of Lords, eh?

TARRADIDDLE.

No, no, on my veracity; the old lady lorded me until I mentioned the army—you see her last lodger was a lord, and her tongue has got used to the word.—Don't notice her—don't notice her;—it's not worth while embarrassing the old lady for the short time we shall occupy her apartments.

HILARY.

We! Then I am to have the honour of your society for a few days?

TARRADIDDLE.

Yes, I'll inconvenience myself to serve you—decision in these matters is everything, and it's a military accomplishment. Hem!

HILARY (*aside*).

Billeted. (*Aloud.*) Bye-the-by, Tarradiddle, as you and I are to be chums, don't you think it will be as well—not that I am curious, but in case I should be asked the question,—to let me know something about you?

TARRADIDDLE.

Something about me?

HILARY.

Yes, you speak to every body, and every body speaks to you; you shoot forth in the morning, coruscate during the day, and vanish at night—you look like a gentleman, (*aside*) a little washed out. (*Aloud.*) But you may be Asmodeus or Commissioner Lin, for what any one knows to the contrary. I suppose you do come from somewhere, and are related to somebody?

TARRADIDDLE.

My dear boy, I consider your questions particularly impertinent—in fact, I wish you hadn't said that; but as I like you, I shall endeavour to gratify your curiosity.

HILARY.

I meant nothing offensive.

TARRADIDDLE.

You *are* a gentleman—and I am the youngest son of one—I entered the army at sixteen, obtained a lieutenancy—

HILARY.

In the Cavalry or Infantry?

TARRADIDDLE.

In the 100th foot—was at Waterloo——

HILARY.

Stay, stay, in the 100th foot; I thought the number of Infantry regiments did not exceed ninety-nine.

TARRADIDDLE.

You are right; for mine was annihilated—literally *cut to pieces*.

HILARY.

Indeed! But why were you're services overlooked?

TARRADIDDLE.

The regiment was so newly raised that no one could identify me; my country has been unjust; I have been generous, and have forgiven her.

HILARY (*aside*).

I don't believe a word he has uttered.

TARRADIDDLE.

I returned to England—quitted the paths of glory “for the shady side of Pall-Mall;” and am bold to say, the service lost an ornament. You now know who I am.

HILARY (*aside*).

Curse me if I do; he's a peripatetic sphinx!

Enter Mrs. DEARPOINT.

MRS. DEARPOINT.

The young woman over the way has brought your lordship a canary.

HILARY.

Lordship!—Mrs. Dearpoint you are labouring under a great mistake, if you think that I am——

TARRADIDDLE.

The person meant—to be sure you are—take care of the dickey, and *show* the young woman into the parlour.

[Exit Mrs. DEARPOINT.]

Come, Pye !

HILARY.

Harkee ! Captain. What per centage do you expect for your services ?

TARRADIDDLE.

Per centage ! My dear Pye, don't hurt my feelings. (*Aloud.*) True friendship seeks for no reward.

HILARY.

Then you are the most disinterested friend in christendom.

TARRADIDDLE (*laughing*).

'Pon my word, I wish you hadn't said that.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

*A Room in the City.**Enter WARNER, followed by GRUB.*GRUB (*looking at his watch*).

Her ladyship is after her appointment.

WARNER (*looking at his watch*).

Half an hour! That's a trifle with these fashionable idlers—they consider minutes as the small change of time, which they throw away as they do pence—whilst poverty husbands 'Tis nature's scheme of equality.

Enter a CLERK.

CLERK.

A lady, Mr. Grub.

GRUB.

Show her in, William.

[*Exit CLERK, looking off.*]

This is her ladyship.

Enter LADY NORWOLD.

LADY NORWOLD.

Mr. Grub, I've discovered you at last, though what with the rumbling of that horrid hackney coach, the unintelligible noise of the footman behind the omnibuses, the smacking of cart whips, and the very naughty words of the waggoners, I am nearly distracted.

WARNER.

William, bring her ladyship a chair.

GRUB.

No, no.

LADY NORWOLD.

Well, have you the money for me? here are the jewels!

[*Gives case, which WARNER earnestly examines.*]

GRUB.

And there are notes for £5000, my lady.

LADY NORWOOD (*counting*).

One, two, three, four, five. I thank you, Mr. Grub. I had no idea that money was made in such a dismal place.

WARNER.

And yet, what a welcome visit—what a powerful friend, or dangerous enemy it becomes, my lady.

LADY NORWOLD.

Who is that, Grub?

GRUB.

The gentleman who has advanced the loan for your ladyship.

LADY NORWOLD.

Oh! you are the gnome of this gloomy region. What miserable creatures your wives must be—elopements must be very frequent.

WARNER.

No, my lady; we dare not indulge in luxuries.

LADY NORWOLD.

Positively satirical! Why, I have heard that it was treason to be witty in the City, and that your only good things were—your dinners.

WARNER.

Possibly your informant's judgment was not equal to his digestion, madam—though wit would be too costly for purposes of commerce: a bargain must not be made for the sake of a repartee, nor a contract concluded by the solution of a conundrum; our conversation should be like our invoices—correct without verbiage or flourishes.

LADY NORWOLD.

And are you contented with this mole-like existence?

WARNER.

Contented! We are proud of our usefulness, for by our enterprize England is the world's wonder!

LADY NORWOLD.

Modesty is not one of your foibles—you have forgotten that Hyde-park, Almack's, and the Opera, are at the West End.

WARNER.

I had forgotten that Temple-bar was your ladyship's equator, and that we are the antipodes of the fashionable hemisphere.

LADY NORWOLD.

What time do you rise?

WARNER.

Usually at seven.

LADY NORWOLD.

At seven! What, so soon after you retire to rest!

WARNER.

I go to bed at ten, madam.

LADY NORWOLD.

Ten! ~~an~~ hour after dinner.

WARNER.

No, madam; I dine at two.

LADY NORWOLD (*in astonishment*).

Then when do you breakfast?

WARNER.

At eight, madam.

LADY NORWOLD.

Why, you live entirely by day-light;—what can compensate you for such a horrid existence; for you never emigrate further than——what are ~~the~~ places called?

WARNER.

I presume your ladyship means Clapham or Brixton.

LADY NORWOLD.

Brixton! yes,—a footman that robbed us was sent there;—poor fellow, I'd no idea that his punishment was so severe, for he had always lived in the *best*

WARNER.

Poor fellow! *then* he must feel the injustice of his sentence—he had seen so many vices characterized as virtues, that he imagined larceny was included.

LADY NORWOLD.

Vices, in the best families! Ha! ha!

WARNER.

Yes, my lady ; idleness, extravagance, pride, and uselessness, are fashionable delinquencies enough to make an angel a bankrupt in virtue.

LADY NORWOLD.

Oh! I see they are too expensive for you men of business. I'm more satisfied than ever; I shall never attempt to make money—I'll content myself with spending it.

WARNER.

Your ladyship appears to be a proficient in the latter art, since £12,000 a year is not sufficient for you.

LADY NORWOLD.

To be candid, I must confess that I have been somewhat imprudent—I have played deeper than I should have done, and his lordship has so strictly forbidden me to indulge in my passion for cards, that I dare not acquaint him with my losses.

WARNER.

A gambler! Your ladyship would faint to be called a trader, though for the love of gain you have deceived your husband—destroyed your own peace—and become a suppliant to Mr. Benjamin Grub.

LADY NORWOLD.

Sir, you are presuming.

WARNER.

No, my lady, you are condescending. Had you preserved your proper position I never should have forgotten mine. Lord Norwold would think as I do.

LADY NORWOLD.

How humiliating. (*Aloud.*) His lordship would punish your insolence. (*Bell heard.*)

WARNER.

Indeed!

LADY NORWOLD.

His lordship *shall* know of it!

Enter WILLIAM.

WILLIAM.

Lord Doncaster!

LADY NORWOLD.

Lord Doncaster!

WARNER.

Yes, my lady; you see you are not our only titled visitor.

GRUB.

Ask him in.

LADY NORWOLD.

Not for the world: he is one of his lordship's most intimate friends!

WARNER.

That cannot make any possible difference to your ladyship.

[GRUB *speaks aside to WILLIAM, who exits.*

Sir! If he was to name that he had seen me here—

would it not provoke inquiry? I should then have to explain, and—

WARNER.

I thought you intended to acquaint his lordship?

LADY NORWOLD.

Is the man mad! Now my dear Mr. Grub, and you you save me from this exposure, and I'll make the interest double.

WARNER.

Oh, my lady, what would the world say did they know all? This way, my lady—don't you think that Folly should come to school in the City?

LADY NORWOLD.

Oh! the bear!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Drawing-room in WARNER'S House.—Evening.—

MISS MAYLEY discovered seated—TATTLE standing beside her.

TATTLE.

Now, Miss, I rely on your honour not to betray me to Mr. Hilary.

MISS MAYLEY.

Tattle! I shall never have an opportunity. An impudent *commoner* to tamper with my maid!

TATTLE.

But I've not quite told you all, Miss.

MISS MAYLEY.

I've heard quite enough; the fellow is good-looking and gentlemanly, certainly; but to dare to make me the subject of conversation, with only an esquire to follow his name! The world would talk, if Marian Mayley has refused some of the first merchants in the City to marry a younger son at the West End.

TATTLE.

But you won't hear me, Miss.—Oh, I'm a poor weak girl, and not fit for the manœuvres of this wicked world.

MISS MAYLEY.

Never mind; my curiosity is satisfied.

TATTLE.

I can't help that, Miss—I must divulge; but should you ever become his wife, my lady, don't tell my lord that I betrayed him.

MISS MAYLEY (*excited*).

My lord!

TATTLE.

But never mind, Miss, as your curiosity is satisfied.

MISS MAYLEY.

But it is not, dear Tattle.

TATTLE.

Dear Tattle! there's no resisting that.—Miss, he's a lord.

MISS MAYLEY.

I knew it—my natural aversion would never have allowed me to fall in love with a commoner.

TATTLE.

What! you *do* love, Miss.—Oh, what reciprocity!

MISS MAYLEY.

No, no, Tattle;—I own I am slightly predisposed in his favour—(*sentimentally*).—But love is the blossom of the tree of life, and expands not in a day.

TATTLE.

And matrimony is the fruit.—I hope, Miss, you'll have a productive autumn.

MISS MAYLEY.

And did he not tell you his name?

TATTLE.

No, Miss.

MISS MAYLEY.

I wish he had;—I should like to have looked at it in that magic volume, the “Blue Book.” It's pleasant there to see one's name in print.—Heigho!

TATTLE.

Don't sigh, Miss; rely upon it, he admires you too much to keep away from you long.

MISS MAYLEY.

I feel *that*, Tattle. If he really loves me, the invisible power that joins heart to heart will guide him to my feet.

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss, there's a something as does do that;—I suppose its animal magnetism.—(*Knock heard.*)

MISS MAYLEY.

See who's at the door. I am out to all visitors, for the joy of this discovery has made me miserable.

TATTLE.

It always does, Miss. (*Aside.*) This is his lordship, if I am not mistaken! [*Exit.*]

MISS MAYLEY.

I may be "my lady" after all—have the honour of being presented at court, and the luxury of seeing my milliner's bill in the "Morning Herald"—perhaps become a lady patroness of Almack's, and the subject of paragraphs in the newspapers—"Make way for her ladyship"—"Does your ladyship dance?"—"Too happy, your ladyship!"—"It is her ladyship."

Enter TATTLE.

TATTLE.

Oh, Miss!

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh! *Miss!* I declare that odious word has nearly thrown me into hysterics.

TATTLE.

Oh! dear! Pet the can ary has escaped from his cage, and flown into the house opposite.

MISS MAYLEY.

What, my Pet?—oh!

TATTLE.

But he is all safe, Miss, again, and by the strangest chance in the world. Who do you think has brought the little brute—darling, I mean—back, Miss?

MISS MAYLEY.

Who, Tattle?

TATTLE.

Now you mustn't faint because he is coming up stairs—but it is his lordship, Mr. Pye Hilary!

MISS MAYLEY.

He—he—in this house!

TATTLE.

Yes, Miss! and only six stairs from the top.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

This is a *ruse*—I knew he would be doing something desperate.

TATTLE.

Oh, here he is.

Enter HILARY and TARRADIDDLE; the latter carrying a bird in a cage.

HILARY (*bows*).

I—that is—we have to apologise, madam, for this intrusion, but understanding that—this—little—little—

TARRADIDDLE.

Canary!

HILARY.

Canary was a favourite of yours—I—that is we—could

not feel satisfied until we—I—we had personally delivered it into possession. (*Aside.*) Am I a barrister? have I eaten terms for this?

MISS MAYLEY.

I am greatly—obliged—for the trouble you have taken about such—a—trifle.

TARRADIDDLE.

It's a sweet bird. Dick! dick! dick!

HILARY.

I'd give the world for my wig! (*Aloud.*) Some philologists have averred that these lower animals are guided by reason and not influenced by instinct; I think this little—little—

TARRADIDDLE.

Canary!

HILARY.

Canary's conduct at once destroys the hypothesis.

MISS MAYLEY.

I don't quite understand you.

TARRADIDDLE.

Curse me, if I think he understands himself!

HILARY.

I mean, madam, that, being an object of solicitude to you, had he been possessed of reason, he would never have grown tired of his captivity.

MISS MAYLEY.

You are flattering me.

HILARY.

Indeed not; for I consider flattery but another form of insult.

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*.)

He's taking a leaf out of my book.

MISS MAYLEY.

I hope, gentlemen, you will excuse my reminding you—grateful—gratified as I am—of the absence of my guardian, Mr. Warner.

HILARY.

It is we who ought to apologise (*going*).

TARRADIDDLE.

What are you at! what are you at! we shan't get in again. (*Aloud*.) May I be so bold, madam, as to inquire if Mr. Warner is the gentleman—who—who drives a pair of grey ponies in a green phaeton?

MISS MAYLEY.

No, Sir.

TARRADIDDLE.

You will excuse my asking; but my name's Tarradiddle—Captain Scrope Tarradiddle.

MISS MAYLEY.

Indeed, Sir.

HILARY (*aside*).

What the deuce is that to Miss Mayley?

TARRADIDDLE.

I should like to see Warner—shouldn't you, Pye?

HILARY.

Nothing would give me greater pleasure. (*Aside.*) He'll board on this side of the street as well as the other.

TARRADIDDLE.

I think I served with him in the Peninsular—

MISS MAYLEY.

Mr. Warner has never been in the army, Sir.

TARRADIDDLE.

I'm sorry to hear you say that. (*Aside.*) Dam'me talk, talk, or we must retreat. •

HILARY.

I—I feel that we are intruders—but—

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

Oh, Lord !

HILARY.

But may I hope, Miss Mayley, at some future period, to extend this brief acquaintance ?

MISS MAYLEY.

I must refer you to Mr. Warner, my lor— Sir.

TARRADIDDLE

Ah ! Tattle has earned her money.—(*Knock.*)

MISS MAYLEY (*goes to window*).

This may be my guardian. (*Aside.*) I wish they were out of the house.

HILARY.

I'm getting uncomfortable—I feel exactly like a dog that anticipates a sudden ejection.

Enter WARNER, who stands surprised.

WARNER.

You have company, Miss Mayley—

MISS MAYLEY.

Yes, Sir; these gentlemen have kindly restored my little favourite, Pet, who by some accident escaped.

HILARY.

I shall always feel grateful to the little wanderer, since he has introduced me to so estimable a gentleman as Mr. Warner.

WARNER.

Thank you, Sir; I believe I am indebted to you for a civility at the Opera?

HILARY.

Don't mention it, Sir; the happiness which it has procured me in—

WARNER.

Who have I the honour of addressing, Sir?

TARRADIDDLE (*interposing*).

A gentleman I am proud to call my friend. My name is Tarradiddle.

WARNER (*looks at him through glass*).

I beg pardon, Sir, for interrupting you—what name did you say?

TARRADIDDLE (*hesitatingly*).

Tar—ra—diddle!

MISS MAYLEY.

You know the captain, then?

WARNER.

Yes; I remember the name.

MISS MAYLEY.

He recognised yours the moment I mentioned it, and thought you had served with him in the Peninsular—

WARNER.

He served in the Peninsular! (*Aside.*) The Penitentiary!

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

He's adding me up,—and has put down nothing.

WARNER.

Hem!—Have you thanked these gentlemen for their politeness, Marian?

MISS MAYLEY.

I have, Sir.

WARNER.

Then as I am an early man, and usually sup about this hour—

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

We shall be invited.

HILARY (*aside*).

No;—ordered out.

WARNER.

You will not think me rude if I wish you good evening. [*Rings.*]

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

I wish he hadn't said that.

HILARY.

I knew he would. (*Aloud.*) Miss Mayley—Mr. Warner.

WARNER (*abruptly*).

Good evening.

HILARY (*aside*).

Good evening.—(*Aside*). Short and cutting! [*Exit.*

TARRADIDDLE

Good evening. (*Aside*). That fellow locks up the tea-caddy! [*Exit.*

WARNER.

Miss Mayley, have you seen these people before?

MISS MAYLEY.

This morning, in the Park, Sir.

WARNER.

Do you know that one of them is little better than a swindler?

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh! you must be mistaken—

WARNER.

In my friend Tarradiddle.—No, no; such men are not to be mistaken.

Enter TATTLE.

MISS MAYLEY.

But the other is a nobleman, and would not acknowledge such an associate were—

WARNER.

A nobleman! Ha! ha! Who told you that Captain Tarradiddle was—

MISS MAYLEY.

No, Sir, it was—(TATTLE motions her to be silent)—
it was—

WARNER (*turns and sees TATTLE*).

Tattle?—I suspected as much—

TATTLE.

And I heard it from Mrs. Dearpoint, at 41.

WARNER.

Indeed! Tattle, you will leave this house to-morrow morning.

TATTLE.

Oh, la, Sir! Oh, Miss!

WARNER.

Silence!—Marian Mayley, you have been dazzled by the glitter of a name.—Be warned—wealth and beauty are dangerous possessions; they have ruined many a heart, and your vanity might have been your destroyer. Go, go to your chamber!

[*Exit MISS MAYLEY, TATTLE following.*]

Tattle, you have heard my determination—

TATTLE.

But, Sir—

WARNER.

Not a word! (*Turns up the stage.*)

TATTLE.

Well, Sir, I don't care a great deal about the place, for Miss Mayley is certain to be married in three months, and then the lady's maid would degenerate into the servant. I shall pack up my boxes—(*aside*) and go and take a preliminary tea with Mr. Sandwell! [*Exit.*]

Enter SERVANT, who delivers a letter.

The post-mark is Paris—from my silly sister-in-law !
[*Exit SERVANT*] (*reads*):—"Dear Brother,—I am distracted"—why, she can't be a widow already!—"and so will you be,"—Indeed!—"On my return to Paris, I found that Lucy had suddenly left the house of Madame Chapeau, and engaged herself as governess in the family of an English nobleman, with whom she has returned to England." What can have driven her to take a course so rash, so inexplicable. But now I thought my anxious cares were ended, and here is a fresh cause of unhappiness—It is rumoured that love,"—no! (*covers his face with his hands*) so sweet a blessing cannot have changed into a curse. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Exterior of LORD NORWOLD's House.

Enter PYE HILARY.

HILARY (*crosses and recrosses the Stage.*)

I was never so thoroughly miserable in my life ! To be cut dead in the presence of the only being that I ever thought worth a ring and a licence—I've a great mind to write, only I should not like to have my letter filed and labelled " Hilary to Mayley—offer of marriage." Old Warner's knowledge of Tarradiddle seemed to be *per contra* to recommendatory—I shall cut the captain, and so be revenged upon somebody.—Eh ! no, as I live, here comes Warner ; something's " up " in the market that he has n't got, or something's " down " that he has ! He seems in a brown study ; I'll watch the old gentleman.

[*Retires a little.*]

Enter WARNER.

WARNER.

My sister's story is too true : under the assumed name of De Vere, Lucy has, for six weeks, lived beneath

his roof, [*looks towards house*] for the first time I shall be driven to cross that threshold, for I must know all!

HILARY (*advances*).

Mr. Warner, good morning.

WARNER.

Good morning, Sir. [*Appears to avoid him.*]

HILARY.

I beg your pardon, Sir, but when we last met I was an intruder in your house; your manner was so constrained towards me, and my position so peculiarly embarrassing that—that—

WARNER.

I know all; the prize was worth the risk, Sir—£15,000.

HILARY.

Oh, hang the money, Sir; it was not that which induced my impertinence.

WARNER.

Pardon me, Sir, if I am incredulous (*looking at PYE*). Such an exquisite *lot* mustn't be given away.

HILARY.

Ah! now you're quizzing me; I own I'm not over modest, but curse me if I am a coxcomb. In the exchange of hearts, woman generally has the worst of it, for most men at twenty-five are sadly tarnished.

WARNER.

You're a specious fellow.

HILARY.

I'm an honest fellow, if you'll only take the trouble to find me out.

WARNER.

I'm afraid I cannot spare so much time—my lord.

HILARY.

Lord! I'm no lord.

WARNER (*aside*).

I thought not.

HILARY.

There's my card—Pye Hilary, Inner Temple;—I'm a barrister.

WARNER.

Why assume a title to which you have no claim?

HILARY.

*But I have a claim; I am a barrister.

WARNER.

But not a lord?

HILARY.

I never said I was.

WARNER.

You did.

HILARY.

To whom?

WARNER.

To Miss Mayley—

HILARY.

To Miss Mayley!

WARNER.

Yes, my lord.

HILARY.

My *lord*! I repeat, Sir, I never assumed that distinction.

WARNER.

But your friend did for you.

HILARY.

What, Tarradiddle?—That fellow's cleverness has ruined everything.

WARNER.

You see your special pleading won't avail with me.—I know you.

HILARY.

If you do, Sir, you must be aware that I am incapable of the dissimulation with which you charge me.

WARNER.

And Captain Tarradiddle——

HILARY.

I knew how it would be—I knew I should suffer for my connexion with that enigma.—Sir, you misunderstand my character.

WARNER.

No, I don't.

HILARY.

Yes, you do;—you think me a fortune-hunter—a swindler—a sneak.

WARNER.

I'd no idea that the profession owned so many degrees.

HILARY.

But you shall make inquiries.

WARNER.

No, no.

HILARY.

But you shall, Sir; I insist upon it, Sir, you shall—
Pump Court—here's my card.

WARNER.

At present, Sir, I have more important business to
attend to——

HILARY.

Than repairing an injury done to a gentleman, and an
honest man, Sir?

WARNER.

You seem in earnest.

HILARY.

I should think so; for you fellows in the City are like
walking "directories:"—and if you labour under the im-
pression that I am a rogue, it is as bad as an advertise-
ment.

WARNER.

But your friend—

HILARY.

D—n my friend; I picked him up at the "Rainbow,"
and, like the "old man of the mountain," he has made me
carry him about ever since.

WARNER.

Well, Sir, I will make some inquiries.

HILARY.

Thank you; and I'll call at your house to-morrow for my character.

WARNER.

If you please.—(*Rings bell.*)

HILARY.

You'll be kind enough to explain to Miss Mayley that——
[NIBBLE *opens the door.*]

WARNER.

I wish to speak with Miss De Vere.

NIBBLE.

She's left here these three days, and won't come back in a hurry.

WARNER.

Left!

NIBBLE.

Her and Master Charles went off together.

WARNER.

False!—(NIBBLE *slams the door to*—WARNER *beats the door*).—Where has she gone?

HILARY.

What's the matter, Sir, what's the matter?

WARNER (*knocks*).

Open the door—tell me where they have sent my child?

NIBBLE (*from area*).

If you don't go away, I'll call the police.

WARNER.

Here, young man, here's money for you.

NIBBLE.

She's eloped!—(*A door is heard to close.*)

WARNER.

Eloped!—no! no!

HILARY.

Do you want to know any further particulars, Sir?

WARNER.

Can *you* tell me of her?

HILARY.

We'll learn.—(*Knocks—a pause—and then continues until NIBBLE opens the door.*)



NIBBLE.

Hallo, Sir! are you aware that that knocker makes a devil of a row inside the house, Sir?

HILARY (*pulls him into the centre*).

Where is that gentleman's daughter?

WARNER.

Where?

NIBBLE.

Leave go my collar, will you? I'm dressed to take up lunch!

HILARY.

Answer, Sir, answer!

WARNER.

Use no violence! Young man, here are five pounds—take them, and tell me where I can find my child.

NIBBLE.

Ah! now you're reasonable. I can understand what the feelings of a father must be, when he pays for them at this rate!

WARNER.

Now, now—

NIBBLE.

The fact is, there's been a blow up. My lord and my lady found out that your daughter and Mr. Charles were —(*winks*)—you understand.

WARNER.

Words, Sir,—I have paid for words!

NIBBLE.

Well, then, that there was something wrong.

WARNER.

I'll not believe it.

NIBBLE.

Then it's no use to tell you any more.

HILARY (*shaking him*).

Go on, Sir.

NIBBLE.

Not by your request. This gentleman has given me five pounds, and you've only given me a shaking!

WARNER.

Tell me the worst!

NIBBLE.

Then they're married; and his lordship has turned them out of doors.

WARNER.

Thank heaven!

NIBBLE.

Well, if I hadn't have heard that, I wouldn't have believed it!

WARNER.

And where are they to be found?

NIBBLE.

That nobody knows; but the general opinion is that they are——

WARNER.

Where?

NIBBLE.

In the Regent's canal!

[*Exit.*

HILARY.

He's a savage! I pass this house every day, and I'll knock, if it's only for the pleasure of telling him so!

WARNER.

What shall I do?

HILARY.

Keep up your spirits—there's a coach-stand in the next street; the waterman may remember something of them, as the young gentleman is most likely known.

WARNER.

You are right, Sir; and money may assist his memory.

HILARY.

Nothing like a refresher, Sir,—as we say at the bar.

I'm an idle man, and if you will accept of my services, you are welcome.

WARNER.

Thanks, Sir, thanks!

HILARY.

Take my arm, Sir—don't despair, Sir—if we fail to-day, we'll move for a new trial to-morrow!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A large Room in TARRADIDDLE'S House, in the Suburbs of London.

CAPTAIN and MRS. TARRADIDDLE discovered.—The latter ironing—the former smoking an old German pipe: he wears a very clean dressing-gown, much patched, and buttoned closely to the neck.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

I wish, Joe, you would step into the next street, and buy the potatoes.

TARRADIDDLE.

Elizabeth, my love, how often am I to request you not to call me Joe—*Joseph* is my name, and nothing is so damned vulgar as Joeing, and Tomming, and Billing.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Vlgar! I'm always a-doing something vulgar!

Heaven knows what would become of you, *if* I was as genteel as you Jo-seph ! There ain't many officers' ladies as would do what I am doing now.

TARRADIDDLE.

My love, I'm not blind to your good qualities ; you know how foolishly fond, how ridiculously proud I am of you, Elizabeth.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Proud ! not much of that, I'm thinking ! We've been married three years, and you've never crossed the doorstep with me but once !

TARRADIDDLE.

You must not blame me for that—blame society.—It's a fashionable axiom, that no man can be seen with his own wife. What would the world say, if I were to infringe so positive a regulation, my love ?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Fashion ! what ought we to have to do with fashion, on an annuity of ninety pounds a year ; or if we have, why don't I go shares ?—No, I'm a slave, I am !

TARRADIDDLE.

I wish you hadn't said that, for are you not the centre of my affections ?—the ivy that has entwined round my heart till it has become a part of it—in fact, are you not Mrs. Tarradiddle ?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

And I might as well be a maid of all-work !

TARRADIDDLE.

My love, don't repine ; you know nothing of this

hollow world—I know too much!—I love you, Elizabeth, and cannot let you mix in that society which I have proved to be worthless; your beauty would only excite envy—your virtues, detraction—your conjugal affection, ridicule. But now, surrounded with your flat-irons, clothes horses, and culinary appurtenances, you look like the embodiment of domestic felicity.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Ah! none of your flowery speeches, if you please—I've had too many of them! Usen't you to tell me about your country house?

TARRADIDDLE.

Here it is—there is Primrose Hill!

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Your parks—

TARRADIDDLE.

Greenwich, Hyde, and Green—they're public property, and we are the public. .

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Pshaw!

TARRADIDDLE.

The fact is, my dear, you are like a great many other people—you are envious, from a want of a perception of the advantages of your own position.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

My advantages! Well, I like that!

TARRADIDDLE.

Are you not the mistress of this mansion?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Mansion!—a ruinous old house! that nobody else would live in!

TARRADIDDLE.

Never mind—it is your's—don't you do your own washing?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

To be sure I do! But what's the advantage of that?

TARRADIDDLE.

Ah! you don't see it—I'll show you. Your linen is always right—nobody wears your stockings but yourself—the basket's always home on a Saturday, and there is no washerwoman's little bill to add up, when you've deciphered it.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Well, there *is* something in that!

TARRADIDDLE.

You've the happiness to be your own cook, your own housemaid—

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

As I know to my sorrow.

TARRADIDDLE.

Because you don't perceive the benefits of your situation. Go where I will, every one is grumbling about their domestics: one lady's going out of her mind through Susan; another's driven mad by Mary;—no comfort any where, for there seems to be an intestine war in every kitchen in the metropolis.—You know nothing of this—isn't that satisfactory?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Well, but you might take me out with you !

TARRADIDDLE.

Ah ! how little do we know in what our *real* happiness consists ! Were we always together, that beautiful, that extatic feeling, which we experience, would be no longer ours.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

What feeling ?

TARRADIDDLE.

I wish you hadn't said that, for it sounds as though you didn't experience it—I mean the pleasure of meeting after absence: were we always together we should hate each other.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

La, Joe !

TARRADIDDLE.

True ! What gives people the yellow fever, and destroys their liver, in India ? the blazing, perpetual sun—nothing but sun won't do—you see what I mean,—kiss me ! Take my word, Elizabeth, you're a happy woman, though you don't know it.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Well, perhaps I am.

TARRADIDDLE.

Have you seen our new lodgers this morning ?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

No ! though at two o'clock to-day, they promised to pay the rent. They seem to have been very respectable.

TARRADIDDLE.

They do—and now seem very poor.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Ah? we arn't the worst off in the world, after all, Joe!

TARRADIDDLE.

Oh! you believe me, at last! Go, go, fetch the potatoes.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Well, I suppose I must—for I never see a man hate to do anything as you do. *[Exit.]*

TARRADIDDLE.

She's quite right—and my progenitor, whoever he was, ought to blush in his grave, for the smallness of my annuity—Lord! what would the world say, if they knew the amount? Poor Elizabeth! she's a very good wife, and much more reasonable than a servant—*(a tap)*. Come in!

Enter MISS DE VERE.—TARRADIDDLE *advances with much politeness of manner.*

Madam, good morning—allow me *(hands a chair)*.

MISS DE VERE.

Thank you, Sir, but I will not trespass longer upon you than I can avoid. *(Aside.)* How my cheek burns!

TARRADIDDLE.

I am always happy to receive the visits of a lady.

MISS DE VERE.

You are pleased to be complimentary, Sir—it is, I believe, two o'clock.

TARRADIDDLE.

I think it must be—though I never carry a watch—it's troublesome, and, since they've illuminated the clocks, unnecessary.

MISS DE VERE.

I promised your lady, Sir, that I would pay her the amount we are indebted to you—but Charles—Mr. Norwold, has not——

TARRADIDDLE.

I understand—Mr. Norwold has not so much at his bank——don't name it!

MISS DE VERE.

Has not returned, I was about to say. Should he be fortunate enough to obtain some employment, he will honourably discharge your claim.

TARRADIDDLE.

Madam, nature has endowed the heart with sympathies, though she has denied expression to the tongue—I hope you understand me, and will consider this house your home, under any circumstances.

MISS DE VERE.

Sir, I am deeply your debtor; we have not always been beggars—perhaps need not be so now; but—

TARRADIDDLE.

Why do you pause?

MISS DE VERE.

Because I have deceived the kindest of fathers;—forgetful of his untiring affection, I listened only to the

selfish promptings of my own heart—my marriage was a secret one.

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

So *is* mine!

MISS DE VERE.

Mr. Norwold and myself were secretly united in Paris, and by a subterfuge I obtained the situation of governess in his father's house.

CHARLES (*calls within*).

Lucy!

MISS DE VERE.

He has returned.—I am here, Charles.

TARRADIDDLE.

Will you ask him in, madam?

MISS DE VERE.

Thank you; but he may not be well;—or—

TARRADIDDLE.

Pray! no apologies!

MISS DE VERE.

Charles shall thank you himself, Sir, presently. (*Aside.*) If he has been unsuccessful, his proud heart will break! [*Exit.*

TAR ADIDDLE.

I'm glad she's gone; I should have embarrassed them. I'll send them an invitation to dinner—it's lucky we have got a joint to-day—a shoulder of mutton, gone to the baker's. (*Writes*):—"Captain and Mrs. Tarradiddle present compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Norwold, and request

the honour of their company to dinner."—That'll do!

Enter Mrs. TARRADIDDLE.

Well, my love, don't take off your bonnet; I want you to ask Mrs. Jackson's little girl, next door, to take this note up to Mrs. Norwold.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Why, you havn't written for the rent?

TARRADIDDLE.

I wish you hadn't said that! No, my love; I've asked the girl to dinner.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Then can't I take it?

TARRADIDDLE.

No, no, my love; that's not etiquette; Jackson's girl must do it.

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

Oh, very well; though it's great nonsense. [*Exit.*

TARRADIDDLE.

It may be; but it's etiquette. Poor souls! I hope they'll not be too proud to accept; for we have four silver forks and a salt-spoon.—[*Tap at the door.*—Come in!

[PYE HILARY *opens the door.*

HILARY.

I beg pardon.—Are you the landlord, Sir?

TARRADIDDLE.

I have that honour, Sir.

H

HILARY.

What! (*Comes in.*) Is Columbus outdone?—Is Captain Ross extinguished—have I discovered the whereabouts of Captain Scrope Tarradiddle?

TARRADIDDLE.

What! Hilary! Hilary, my boy! how do you do?

HILARY.

I must shake hands with you, to satisfy myself that you're substantial!—(*shakes his hand*). Then you do live in a house, and sleep in a bed like other people?

TARRADIDDLE.

Yes!

HILARY.

Very retired out here—are villas dear in this neighbourhood?

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

Hem! he's quizzing the domus!

HILARY.

Freehold, or leasehold—do you vote for the county, or the borough—eh, Captain?

TARRADIDDLE.

Ha! Ha! (*Aside.*) How the devil did he find me out?

Enter MRS. TARRADIDDLE, who stares at HILARY.

HILARY.

Good morning, ma'am; have I the honour of addressing Mrs. Tarradiddle?

MRS. TARRADIDDLE.

I am that personage.

HILARY.

I am proud to make the acquaintance! (*Aside to TARRADIDDLE.*) Lovely animal! I've seen her before.

TARRADIDDLE.

Indeed!

HILARY.

Isn't she maid of honour to the Queen?

TARRADIDDLE.

No, no.

HILARY.

Then she was maid of all-work at the Queen's Head.

TARRADIDDLE

He knows her. She was. [*Exit MRS. TARRADIDDLE.*]

HILARY.

And what are you out here, Tarradiddle?—an Indian chief, a refugee, or a field marshal?

TARRADIDDLE.

Fie! fie! but you're young. No, my dear boy, I am Captain Tarradiddle still.

HILARY.

Rather queer quarters, Captain. I don't wonder at your putting yourself to an inconvenience to serve me.

TARRADIDDLE.

Don't mention that. By the bye, have you heard anything from your innamorato?

HILARY.

Indirectly; I've heard from her guardian.

TARRADIDDLE.

Ah! then that's the reason you've hunted me out?

HILARY.

No; for strange to say, he entertains a singular opinion of you—he thinks you're a swindler.

TARRADIDDLE.

A swindler! I wish he had'nt said that!—I hope you contradicted it?

HILARY.

No, I did'nt; but I will, if you'll give me authority.

TARRADIDDLE.

Authority, Sir!

HILARY.

Yes; for I shouldn't like to do so on my own responsibility, in case he might not believe me. However, he'll be here in a few minutes—I've sent a messenger to him, and then you can convince him that you're a householder.

TARRADIDDLE.

And I am a householder, Sir—this is my house, and if you are here to insult me, there's the door, Sir!

HILARY.

Come, come!—we mustn't quarrel. I think I know you better now, than I did from your own description, though that was very explicit: you live more for the world than upon it. Now tell me—you have two lodgers here, of the name of Norwold?

TARRADIDDLE.

I have.

HILARY.

they at home?

TARRADIDDLE.

They are.

HILARY.

Could I see them?

TARRADIDDLE.

They occupy the next room.

HILARY.

You're angry.

TARRADIDDLE.

Rather—swindler's a very nasty word, and if I knew where to borrow a brace of pistols, I'd call old Warner out.—I'm a vain man, I admit, but no swindler!

HILARY (*aside*).

I hardly dare believe him, but I will! (*Aloud.*) Captain, there's my hand!

TARRADIDDLE.

And mine, Sir!

HILARY.

I say—I thought you were a bachelor? I'd no idea you were practising the madman's arithmetic,—multiplying misery by two. Sly dog!

TARRADIDDLE.

My dear boy, I will not wrong Mrs. T. by denying my own folly. A house is but a house, *without* a woman—a paradise with—and Mrs. T. is an angelic pattern of her sex, and gets up linen better than any woman in the three kingdoms.

HILARY.

Oh! you married her for cleanliness and contrast—she is the useful, you are the ornamental! There's a coach! (*Runs to window.*) It is Warner!

TARRADIDDLE.

Warner!

HILARY.

Yes—the fact is your lodger, Mrs. Norwold, is the old boy's daughter.

TARRADIDDLE.

Indeed!

HILARY.

Yes—it's a long story; love, mystery, and elopement. I'll tell you all by and by; go to her, and break the intelligence of her father's arrival gently to her.

TARRADIDDLE.

I understand, I understand; but swindler—I wish he hadn't said that!

[*Exit.*]

HILARY.

Well—luck's all at last! The old boy seems very grateful for my sympathy; and Miss Mayley—never mind, she's a woman, and I'm but six-and-twenty! (*Calls off.*) This way, Sir!

Enter WARNER.

WARNER.

Well, my young friend!

HILARY.

All right, Sir,—at least I hope so.

WARNER.

Have you traced them? Are they in this house!

HILARY.

First hear me—(*HILARY narrates the following, hurriedly, and evinces anxiety, by continually looking back, towards the door of MISS DE VERE's exit.*) I found the coach No. 894 on the stand, and the coachman in the public-house.—After a deal of conversation, and two and sixpence, he recollected where he had deposited his fare.

WARNER.

In this neighbourhood?

HILARY.

Yes; he set them down at the corner of a street—rather vague, that; but to work I went, rapped up one side of the street, and dabbed down the other. I was almost in despair, but what should I see?

WARNER.

But Lucy?

HILARY.

No : a grocer's shop.—Hit the scent immediately—
found there was a genteel couple in this house, and—

Enter TARRADIDDLE.

TARRADIDDLE.

The lady in the next room is ready to receive company.

WARNER.

Ah, it is my child ! Lucy ! dear Lucy !

[Exit with PYE HILARY.]

TARRADIDDLE.

Rather rude ; but parental feelings must take the
precedency of etiquette. *[Exit.]*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A spacious Room in WARNER'S House.

Enter WARNER, with an opened letter in his hand.

WARNER.

All proceeds as I wish. Her ladyship seems very desirous to obtain the loan of her jewels for their ensuing party. I have dispatched a very pressing letter to his lordship; who, I have no doubt, will be sufficiently alarmed at its contents, to insure compliance with my request for an interview. Ah! my barrister-at-law!

Enter PYE HILARY.

HILARY.

Good evening, Mr. Warner.

WARNER (*looking at watch*).

You are punctuality itself, Mr. Hilary.

HILARY.

You forgot the introduction you promised me, and I am very anxious to make my peace with Miss Mayley.

WARNER.

I think I have already effected that for you. Here is the lady.

Enter MISS MAYLEY.

WARNER.

Miss Mayley, my young *friend* Mr. Pye Hilary. As you have met before, perhaps you will excuse me, and entertain each other for a few minutes.

HILARY.

Certainly, Sir.

[*Exit* WARNER.]

HILARY.

I am afraid, Miss Mayley, that the impertinence of my last visit has subjected you to some unpleasantness.

MISS MAYLEY.

I was then a mental invalid, Mr. Hilary, and though Mr Warner's treatment has been any thing but agreeable, it has cured me of a very foolish notion, and taught me not to trust too much to appearance.

HILARY (*aside*).

That's severe. Then I am afraid that like phials after sickness, I shall be put aside as a disagreeable memento of what you have suffered.

MISS MAYLEY.

Suppose I were to consider you as the physician's prescription,—a valuable remedy against vanity and a careless confidence ?

HILARY.

But will you ?

MISS MAYLEY.

You must not ask me that question—(*aside*) at least not yet; (*aloud*) though I am sure you anticipate a speedy return of one of the symptoms—vanity.

HILARY.

Would that I could induce the other—confidence.

MISS MAYLEY.

Are you not asking too much, considering the change in your circumstances ?

HILARY.

Change !

MISS MAYLEY.

Is not the lord a commoner ?

HILARY.

Nay, you know I had to thank Tarradiddle for my barony.

MISS MAYLEY.

So I have heard. It was cruel to tempt me with so glittering a deceit ; I think I should have paused at a knighthood.

HILARY.

Then there is hope for me.

MISS MAYLEY.

Have I not told you that I am convalescent. My vanity might have elected the lord—my heart must elect the commoner.

HILARY.

Then be a generous constituent, and give a plumper in my favour.

MISS MAYLEY.

I can make no promises until I know your qualifications.

HILARY.

I am a gentleman by birth and education.

MISS MAYLEY.

Most candidates have these pretensions.

HILARY.

I'm six and twenty.

MISS MAYLEY.

That is a negative evil; for recollect, your election is for life, and not determinable by good behaviour.

HILARY.

There's Doctors' Commons—the conjugal Chiltern Hundreds. Then I'm a barrister-at-law.

MISS MAYLEY.

Hem! I think a wig would spoil you.

HILARY.

If I promise, it shall be my Lord Chancellor's.

MISS MAYLEY.

Oh bribery ! bribery !—you are tempting me with a ladyship again.

HILARY.

What, have you faith in election promises ?

MISS MAYLEY.

I have in yours, because you would gain more than I should by keeping your word : you would be the sun of woolsack—I but the moon reflecting the light of the law. “ My lady ”—no !—the word has lost its charms.

HILARY.

Then let me ask Mr. Warner to nominate me. I’ll be my own seconder.

MISS MAYLEY (*aside*).

The show of hands will be in his favour, for I know of no opposition.

HILARY (*kisses her hand—aside*).

Silent ! then I shall have to take the oaths.

Enter WARNER, CHARLES, and MISS DE VERE.

WARNER.

Hem ! we are intruding.

HILARY.

No, Sir ; I had just arrived at a full stop, and am obliged to you for commencing a new paragraph.

WARNER (*to MISS DE VERE*).

You see, my dear, the force of example. It is useless to write up "dangerous" over the slippery surface of matrimony.

MISS DE VERE.

You forget, dear father, that love is blind, and cannot read the warning.

WARNER.

That's an error of the ancient limners; Hymen should have worn the bandage.

CHARLES.

That would have made but little difference, for he would have had Hope for a guide.

WARNER.

Hope! Life's will-o'-the-wisp!

MISS MAYLEY.

Then what would you give us in exchange for hope?

WARNER.

Experience.

MISS MAYLEY.

Ha! Experience has his face to the past; youth must have a companion that looks to the future. (*Knock.*)

WARNER.

I'm glad we are interrupted, or I should have been led to think that the present generation are no wiser than their forefathers.

Enter SERVANT, who announces. CAPTAIN
TARRADIDDLE.

WARNER.

Ask him up.

SERVANT.

I did so, Sir, but—

WARNER.

Why do you pause?

SERVANT.

He requested to be announced, whilst he arranged his cravat, and put on his pumps in the parlour. . [*Exit.*

WARNER.

Ha! ha! what a strange compound of vanity, meanness, and benevolence!

MISS DE VERE.

Nay, meanness is surely an exception.

CHARLES.

We have experienced only his benevolence.

MISS MAYLEY.

What says Mr. Hilary?

HILARY.

Why you puzzle me.—If you enter a tavern and order luncheon, Tarradiddle comes in with the sandwiches looking all appetite: if you call for wine he appears as the Genii of the bottle, evidently all thirst: if you speak of him—think of him, he is smiling at your elbow—

Enter TARRADIDDLE, foppishly dressed.

TARRADIDDLE.

Ladies, your most devoted—gentlemen your most obedient.

WARNER.

Welcome, Sir, welcome ! (*Shakes his hand.*)

MISS DE VERE.

Welcome, Sir !

TARRADIDDLE.

'Pon my word—every thing very elegant—what I'm used to—

HILARY (*aside*).

At home ?

TARRADIDDLE.

No, when I'm out.

MISS MAYLEY.

I am afraid Captain Tarradiddle has forgotten me.

TARRADIDDLE.

My dear madam, I wish you had'nt said that ; you do me an injustice ; but I feel a little diffidence in your presence.

HILARY.

Diffidence !

TARRADIDDLE.

Yes; I hope the sensation is not going to last; if it does I'm ruined.

MISS MAYLEY.

Am I then so terrible, Captain?

TARRADIDDLE.

Lovely, you should have said.—But I cannot forget, though I will endeavour to forgive, an opinion that was once——

WARNER.

Expressed by me, Sir. I retract and apologize; but I think you will excuse me in some measure when I—*(turns to the others)*—Will you pardon me?

OMNES.

Certainly—*(retire up)*.

WARNER *(to TARRADIDDLE)*.

Did you ever know Mr. Scampton?

TARRADIDDLE.

Scampton! yes! an ungrateful rascal. He emigrated to Boulogne with my opera-glass and crush-hat which I lent him.

WARNER.

Did you never lend him anything else?

TARRADIDDLE.

Nothing.

WARNER.

Never your name?

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

I meant nothing of value.

WARNER (*produces a bill of exchange*).

Is that your autograph?

TARRADIDDLE.

Why "T—a—r"—I believe that is Tarradiddle—

WARNER.

You see how my mistake arose—will you be kind enough to accept of this as my written apology.—(*Gives bill.*)

TARRADIDDLE.

With much pleasure; for it will remind me how easily an injury may be inflicted—(*points to bill*). How kindly redressed—(*bows to WARNER.*) I'll have it framed, Mr. Warner, as a proof of my respectability.

MISS MAYLEY

So I find that I am deposed, Guardy?

WARNER.

Deposed?

MISS MAYLEY.

Yes; Lucy has informed me that by your generosity she is the future mistress of this establishment.

WARNER.

The fact is, as we expect some relatives this evening, I was anxious that Charles and Lucy should receive them in their own house.

MISS MAYLEY.

Indeed!

WARNER.

Lord and Lady Norwold.

HILARY, MISS MAYLEY, *and* TARRADIDDLE.

Lord and Lady Norwold!

WARNER.

Yes; Lucy will explain all—I expect them every moment.

TARRADIDDLE (*arranging his dress*).

Delightful! If I had listened to Mrs. T. I should have come in my yesterday's waistcoat.

HILARY (*observing him*).

This is hardly fair, Mr. Warner—the Captain will have such a decided advantage, he is so expensively decorated.

TARRADIDDLE.

My dear boy, it is the boast of some honest people that they are always prepared for the worst; it is mine that I am always dressed for the best.—Hem!

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Lady Norwold.

[MISS MAYLEY, HILARY, *and* TARRADIDDLE *exeunt*.

WARNER.

Now to read vanity a lesson that her ladyship will not easily forget.

Enter LADY NORWOLD and SERVANT, who places a chair and exits at back.—The doors remain open and discover the party in the Drawing-room.

LADY NORWOLD (*curtseys—aside*).

That horrible old cit! (*Aloud.*) Well, my dear Sir, I have paid you an earlier visit than I expected (*aside*) or desired.

WARNER.

Your ladyship does me honour.

LADY NORWOLD.

Has Grub told you what I require?

WARNER.

Yes, my lady.

LADY NORWOLD.

And the dear soul consents to oblige me, do you not?

WARNER.

I have not done so at present, though I dare say your ladyship will not object to my terms.

LADY NORWOLD.

My good man, Grub will inform you how liberal I am.

WARNER.

I am no stranger to your ladyship's generosity, but—(*takes out a case of diamonds*) but these gems are valuable to me.

LADY NORWOLD.

And to me, also—they were the wedding present of his lordship.

WARNER.

Do you admire diamonds?

LADY NORWOLD.

What woman does not? Many hearts have been lost for a suit of brilliants.

WARNER.

Hearts!

LADY NORWOLD.

Well, hands—they are nearly synonymous.

WARNER.

The happiness of a life bartered for a bauble—a piece of crystal, to which fashion and vanity alone give value.

LADY NORWOLD.

Poor fashion! Why affect to despise that, which you take so much pains to imitate?

WARNER.

Your ladyship wrongs me—I only seek to be an honest merchant.

LADY NORWOLD.

Indeed! And yet this apartment seems somewhat incompatible with the parsimony of Cheapside—one would never dream that these elegancies were needed by the proprietor of that gloomy room in the City: there you are the chrysalis—here, the butterfly—(*aside*) and certainly not the gaudiest of your tribe.

WARNER.

Surely a pardonable love of good taste—

LADY NORWOLD.

Taste ! and yet you despise fashion—you railers at the follies of the world have the cowardice to *follow*, without the courage to lead ! (*Retires up.*)

WARNER (*aside*).

Egad she's right !—I'm afraid the scholar is schooling the teacher !

LADY NORWOLD.

These vases are very elegant ! are they used as receptacles for preserves ?

WARNER.

Preserves !

LADY NORWOLD.

Yes—such an advocate for usefulness surely must abjure the ornamental.

WARNER.

I shall lose my vantage ground !

LADY NORWOLD.

But to the object of my visit here. I would not for the world be without my diamonds on his lordship's birth-day !

WARNER.

Nor shall you, my lady.

LADY NORWOLD (*aside*).

Really the man is not such a brute as I thought him.

WARNER.

Upon one condition.

LADY NORWOLD.

What is that? (*Aside.*) An additional five per cent. of course!

WARNER.

Why, my lady, I shall be very reasonable. As your ladyship cannot give me any equivalent security, and, having a mind to see how you great folks entertain your friends, you shall have the diamonds for the night, provided—

LADY NORWOLD.

Well, Sir, why do you pause?

WARNER.

Provided I am allowed to attend upon your ladyship during the evening.

LADY NORWOLD.

In what capacity?

WARNER.

As a friend—an old acquaintance.

LADY NORWOLD (*rising*).

What?

WARNER.

I would glide about as noiselessly as your shadow, hold your fan whilst you danced, hand you to your chair, and—

LADY NORWOLD.

You!

WARNER.

Does your ladyship object ?

LADY NORWOLD.

Object ! Do you think any consideration in the world would allow me to degrade myself so much as to acknowledge you in public,—at my own house too, and before the most fashionable party of the season. Object ! Does the man think me mad ?

WARNER.

Your ladyship's conduct makes it a pardonable inference.

LADY NORWOLD.

Mr. Warner, though your vulgarity may not be contagious, your presence in my house would subject me to a twelvemonth's quarantine at Almack's.

WARNER.

* Very well, my lady—then I demand the instant repayment of the money advanced upon these baubles as well as the other sums which your ladyship has received through our mutual agent Mr. Grub, amounting in all to £8000. Are you prepared with that sum, my lady ?

LADY NORWOLD.

No ! (*Aside.*) To what has my folly reduced me !

WARNER.

Then I shall proceed against his lordship to-morrow, and sell these diamonds by public auction.

LADY NORWOLD.

No, no !

WARNER.

I say yes. I shall describe them as late the property of Lady Norwold;—what will the world say to that?

LADY NORWOLD.

You cannot be such a monster; you cannot estrange husband and wife, and for an act of indiscretion consign me to beggary and disgrace.

WARNER.

Yet for a more venial fault than deceiving and ruining a husband, did you and your noble lord consign his son and my daughter to such a fate.

LADY NORWOLD.

Your daughter! Was Miss De Vere your daughter?

WARNER.

Yes, my lady. Is not the retribution a just one?

LADY NORWOLD.

Oh, Sir (*weeps*). This moment has taught me how to feel for others.

WARNER.

Dare you repair the wrong which you have done; dare you become the advocate of those whom you have despised?

LADY NORWOLD.

I dare—I will!

WARNER.

I will soon test your ladyship's sincerity, for his lordship will be here.

LADY NORWOLD.

Here? Henry here! Then I am lost, for he will despise me.

WARNER.

Fear not, madam; when next you meet he will be too humbled to feel resentment; prove but sincere in what you have professed and the result will be a happier one than you anticipate.

LADY NORWOLD.

Whatever be the consequences to myself I will redeem my word.

WARNER.

I will trust you, madam; let me conduct your ladyship into the next room.

[*Exit* LADY NORWOLD.]

She has had a hard task, for early prejudice and habitual feelings are not easily subdued. Now for my lord's lesson. Where is the talisman that is to work this cure? (*Takes a bracelet set with diamonds from a jewel case.*)

SERVANT *announces*

Lord Norwold.

Enter LORD NORWOLD. (*They bow.*)

LORD NORWOLD.

Mr. Warner—

WARNER.

The same, my lord.

LORD NORWOLD.

Are you the writer of this letter?

WARNER.

I am, my lord.

LORD NORWOLD.

You here state that my title and property are in danger. What reason have you to justify such an assertion ?

WARNER.

It is here, my lord. (*Showing bracelet.*)

LORD NORWOLD (*starts*).

That ! How came you possessed of that bracelet ?

WARNER.

That is my secret, my lord, which I am prepared to sell to you.

LORD NORWOLD.

Do you then know its history ?

WARNER.

Too well, my lord. Your elder brother, when a boy, was accused by you, before his own father and the assembled household, of purloining this toy. *You*, my lord, *you* knew that he was innocent. His protestations were disbelieved, and the heir of Norwold left his father's house never to return.—He died in India, it is said, of a broken heart, caused by his father's and his brother's wrong.

LORD NORWOLD.

You do indeed know all. What are your conditions of secrecy ?

WARNER.

An act of justice upon your part.

LORD NORWOLD.

What do you mean?

WARNER.

Your son is husband of my child. Because she lived by the noblest of all labour—the education of infancy—you drove them forth with a curse, and without a shelter.

LORD NORWOLD.

He forgot the name he bore, and ——

WARNER (*shows bracelet*).

He forgot the name he bore! My lord, the bracelet!—

LORD NORWOLD.

Ah! you have humbled me.

WARNER.

Do you longer hesitate?

LORD NORWOLD.

No, no; I should have no pride, no feeling for a name I have disgraced.

WARNER.

Brother!

LORD NORWOLD.

Brother!

WARNER.

I am the man you wronged—I have lived, toiled only to prove my innocence, and to forgive my wronger.

LORD NORWOLD (*takes his hand*).

Eustace, take all, for I shall now be happy.

WARNER.

No, my brother; I have lived too long as the merchant Warner, to covet another name. For all our sakes this story must be known only to ourselves. (*Opens door.*)

Enter LADY NORWOLD.

LORD NORWOLD.

Lady Norwold!

LADY NORWOLD.

Yes, my lord; I am here as—

WARNER.

An advocate in a cause which is already decided.

LADY NORWOLD.

Decided!

LORD NORWOLD.

Yes, Lydia.

WARNER (*at back*).

Charles, your father's arms are open to receive you.

LORD and LADY NORWOLD, CHARLES, and MISS DE
VERE, *embrace at back.*

TARRADIDDLE.

I'm glad they're doing that.

MISS MAYLEY (*to* WARNER).

You deal clever, old creature! for you seem to have made every one happy and contented.

WARNER.

Is that true, Mr. Hilary?

HILARY.

Why, not quite every one; though you might render me the happiest fellow in Christendom.

WARNER.

How?

HILARY.

If you would use your interest with Miss Mayley in my behalf.

WARNER.

Oh! I have done with that troublesome puss; she must find another guardian. There, go along—(*passes MISS MAYLEY to HILARY*)—I hand you over to the safe keeping of the law.

MISS MAYLEY.

Fie, Mr. Warner! The man will actually fancy that I am anxious to have him for a husband.

HILARY.

For once let me trust to appearance; for I am very anxious to have you for a wife.

TARRADIDDLE.

I'm glad you said that, because it settles the matter. Everybody paired but you and I, Mr. Warner. (*Aside.*) I wish I'd brought Mrs. Tarradiddle, for I feel like a crussed fowl without its gizzard.

WARNER.

What now remains? My schooling's at an end;
And where I've lost a pupil, found a friend.

[*Takes NORWOLD's hand.*]

LORD NORWOLD.

When pride would play the despot in my heart,
The thought of thee shall cauterize the part;
And ere I censure others, pause to find—
If I, the censor, own a spotless mind.

CHARLES.

And I'll no more (should fortune frown) mistrust,
That man's instinctive nature's to be just.

TARRADIDDLE.

I've not a word to say.

HILARY.

Nothing man! Zounds
You must have something?

TARRADIDDLE (*smiling*).

Lend me fifty pounds.

MISS DE VERE.

A hundred if you wish——

CHARLES.

Why pause, sweet wife?

TARRADIDDLE (*aside*).

I'm very glad they said that, 'pon my life!

MISS MAYLEY (*to LADY NORWOLD*).

You've the last word

WARNER.

Why that is nought uncommon.

MISS MAYLEY.

True; 'tis a privilege allowed to woman.

LADY NORWOLD.

What shall I say? I've owned my fault before?

HILARY.

Our author, madam's trembling at the door;
Waiting to learn the verdict of to-night——

LADY NORWOLD.

Why don't he speak himself?

HILARY.

His trade's to write.

LADY NORWOLD (*advances*).

You've heard the task assigned me—may I plead,
That justice will for once *be blind* indeed?
The mightiest river hath an humble source,
And hope may give our scribblers pinion force;
To-night you are his world—what will you say?
Be merciful, and own you like his Play.

fiddle, for I

